

# Weekend FINANCIAL TIMES

**Weekend FT**  
**Russia: Groaning under the lash of democracy**

**French lessons with Isabelle Huppert**

**12 pages of residential property**

SECTION II

World Business Newspaper

WEEKEND JUNE 15/JUNE 16 1996

## Diplomats keen for Bosnia poll to go ahead in September

Bosnian elections should be held by September 14 even if Bosnia Serb leaders indicted for war crimes remain in power, diplomats agreed overwhelmingly at a conference to review progress since the Dayton peace accord.

US President Bill Clinton, who has pledged to pull out the 16,000-strong US force by the end of the year, has strongly opposed the delay of the poll, fearing criticism during his campaign for re-election. Page 3

**US economic growth accelerates:** US industrial production rose sharply for the second consecutive month in May, confirming an acceleration of economic growth. The Federal Reserve said industrial output rose by 0.7 per cent last month and 3.2 per cent in the year to May. Page 4

**Russian election fears hit London shares**

Worries about global bond markets affected shares in London, with the FT-SE 100 closing down 8.1 points lower at 3,753.6. Gilt was under pressure due to weakness in German bunds, which reflected increasing concern about the Russian elections this weekend. Over the week, the index posted a 46.8 gain, with some observers adopting the view that interest rates may be cut further ahead of a general election. Bonds, Page 7; World stocks, Page 17; London stocks, Page 18; Lex, Page 23; Markets, Weekend Page XX

**Football directors sell 4.5m shares:** Four directors of English football club Manchester United have cashed in on the recent surge in its share price by selling more than 4.5m shares for £21m (£\$2m). Page 6

**Missile bidders asked to cut prices:** The UK Ministry of Defence has asked competitors bidding for a £650m (£\$95m) cruise missile contract for last-minute price cuts in an unusual move which intensifies the battle for the order. Page 5

**Appeal to accountants on liability:** Michael Heseltine, the deputy UK prime minister, launched an 11th-hour attempt to stop accountancy firms registering off-shore in the island of Jersey to protect partners' personal wealth from litigation. Page 5

## European results analysis

On Monday, the Financial Times will publish a comprehensive analysis of European company results for 1996. The review, by the FT's industrial specialists and Lex team, will cover 20 industries and detail the top companies in each sector.

**NeuroSearch shares soar:** The price of shares in NeuroSearch, the Danish pharmaceuticals venture company, soared 33 per cent to DKK227 in a brisk first day of trading in Copenhagen. Page 6

**Yorkshire Electricity denies speculation:** Yorkshire Electricity, a regional electricity company in the UK, has denied speculation that it is seeking to be taken over. Page 6

**S Africa committed to tighter fiscal policy:** The South African government committed itself to a tighter fiscal policy and moved cautiously to ease foreign exchange controls as it unveiled its long-awaited macro-economic strategy. Page 22

**Finnair shares slide 9% on warnings:** Shares in Finnair fell 9 per cent after the Helsinki-based airline said slower growth in traffic and higher costs would trigger a "substantial decline" in profits for the current financial year. Page 6

**Framatome rules out buying into Valeo:** Framatome, the French nuclear plant group, has ruled out buying a strategic stake in Valeo, the automotive components company. Page 6

**Pre-Olympic crime sweep nets 765:** Police arrested 765 career criminals and violent offenders in a 10-week sweep intended to make Atlanta and two other southern cities, Birmingham and Mexico, safer during the summer Olympic games.

**Portugal and Turkey's football hopes:** Turkey lost 1-0 to Portugal in their Euro 96 group match at Nottingham, central England, ending their chances of moving into the quarter-finals.

### Companies in this issue

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## Unauthorised copper dealings to be investigated ■ Prices rally after early selling

# UK fraud office probes \$1.8bn loss by Sumitomo

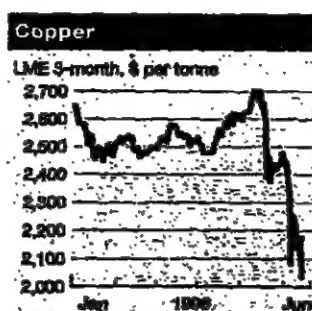
By Kenneth Gooding and Norma Cohen in London and William Dawkins and Michio Nakamoto in Tokyo

The UK's Serious Fraud Office is investigating the circumstances that led to Sumitomo Corporation, the world's largest copper trader, losing an estimated \$1.8bn in unauthorised copper dealings in the past 10 years. The City of London police are also involved.

Mr Yasuo Hamanaka, the Japanese group's former senior copper trader and once seen as the most powerful man in the business, was dismissed by Sumitomo following an international investigation. Much of his trading was done via the London Metal Exchange.

Fears that the exchange's copper market, already in turmoil, might crash, causing financial casualties, proved unfounded yesterday.

After a brief rush of early selling, the copper price rallied. Mr Raj Bagri, chairman, said: "The



LME has demonstrated that this market can take this kind of thing on the chin."

One LME official said that "a lot of pressure was applied by influential people in a lot of places to ensure the copper market was stable today". Sumitomo helped provide stability by saying it would honour all its copper contracts and would not further disrupt the market by trying to wind down its positions quickly.

Mr Tomitichi Akiyama, president of the big trading house, said he was "overwhelmed with shame". The group was ready to cover any losses from a further plunge in copper prices, he said. Japanese financial markets yesterday reacted calmly to the revelations. The Nikkei 225 index rose 0.94 per cent to a high for the year of 22,286.89, within which trading company shares were mixed, apart from Sumitomo, which was suspended.

However, the group's creditworthiness has been damaged. Standard & Poor's, the credit rating agency, downgraded Sumitomo Corporation's short-term debt and placed the company on credit watch for a possible further downgrade after clarification of the exact extent of the loss, which depends on copper prices. Standard & Poor's said that even though Sumitomo's credit quality had declined, the group's large hidden assets should enable it to absorb the deficit. Moody's Investor Service said



Dismissed: Yasuo Hamanaka was once seen as the most powerful man in the business

It was considering downgrading Sumitomo's long-term debt.

Sumitomo's loss was revealed after the close of trading in New York on Thursday. Mr Hamanaka could face criminal charges in the UK and US, where the deals were carried out, said the group president.

Mr Hamanaka confessed after Sumitomo started internal inquiries following an international investigation which started last November.

The UK Securities and Investments Board said yesterday it had been investigating transactions in the copper markets "for several months".

Sumitomo's loss, the second caused by a rogue Japanese trader in less than a year following last September's discovery of a \$1.1bn deficit on unauthorised bond dealing at Daiwa Bank, shocked the Japanese government.

Mr Ryutaro Hashimoto, the prime minister, questioned whether the lesson of the Daiwa disaster had been learned. "As long as a company conducts business activities, there is the possibility of suffering from losses. But it is a problem if there is something against the rules," he said.

The Sumitomo crisis, Page 2  
The tale of Mr Five Per Cent, Page 5; Lex, Page 23; London stocks, Page 18

## European rendering 'fails to kill possible BSE link'

By Deborah Hargreaves in London, Neil Buckley in Brussels and David Suchan in Paris

Most European Union rendering practices for producing meat and bone meal from animal carcasses still fail to eliminate the scrapie infection - a sheep disease implicated as a cause of BSE or mad cow disease - according to results of research not yet published.

The findings, at Britain's Institute of Animal Health, are disturbing because many scientists

attribute the cause of the mad cow epidemic in the UK to a relaxation in rendering practices in the early 1980s.

This apparently allowed the BSE agent to survive in meat and bone meal for cattle that was made from sheep remains tainted with scrapie.

The European Commission changed rendering rules in 1994 following experiments which showed that the agent causing BSE was eliminated at high temperatures.

However, the new experiments

have cast doubt on the effectiveness of the new rules.

"The scrapie experiments used higher levels of infectivity than the BSE trials and showed that rendering processes failed to inactivate the agent completely," said Mr Chris Bostock, head of molecular biology at the institute.

The Commission has drafted legislation to change rendering processes in all member countries as a result of the research, which it hopes to have in place by December 1. The rules will

force all countries to introduce "pressure-cooking" methods for rendering down animal carcasses, in which they will be treated at high pressure and high temperatures.

Such processes are in place only in Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands and only for dealing with diseased animals in those countries.

A Commission official said: "It is obviously logical to insist on the safest processing method."

Rendering companies say scientific evidence showing that scrapie survives current process-

ing techniques does not necessarily mean meat and bone meal produced by those methods is infected with scrapie. "You would have to be processing high levels of scrapie-infected sheep in the first place," said Mr Paul Foxcroft, sales director of Prosper de Mulder, the UK's biggest renderer.

Meat and bone meal made from the remains of cattle and sheep has been banned from cattle and sheep feed in the UK since 1989 because of the risk of BSE, but can

still be fed to pigs and poultry in EU countries outside the UK. Rendering companies say it will cost many millions of pounds to change processing methods.

Meanwhile, EU vets meeting in Brussels yesterday gave a broadly positive response to the UK's five-stage framework, submitted this week, for lifting the beef export ban, clearing the way for an intense round of discussions in the next few days to try to secure formal agreement before the Florence summit of EU leaders starts on Friday.

## Russian 'MinFin' bond prices fall further in nervous market

By Nicholas Denton in London and Chrystie Friesland in Moscow

Prices of Russian Ministry of Finance bonds fell further yesterday in this and nervous market conditions after news spread that many of the securities in circulation were stolen and had been frozen.

The ministry moved to reassure investors with a statement that the bonds would be handed over to their "rightful owners" once the freeze had been lifted. It said the face value of the frozen bonds was less than \$50m.

But the Russian authorities did not clarify whether the rightful owners were those from whom the bonds were stolen or the investors and banks who bought

them in good faith. Western investment bankers said there was no assurance that the freeze would not spread further.

Western investment banks reported numerous inquiries by clients concerned about the security of their investments in the "MinFin" bonds. One trader in Moscow said he had been harried by telephone calls. "It was absolute mayhem," he said.

After a brief recovery yesterday morning, the bid price on MinFin series 3 fell back to close in Moscow at \$65 per \$100 of face value, \$1.10 down on the day and \$5.50 down on Thursday last week when the selling began.

The withdrawal of Bank of America and Deutsche Morgan Grenfell from trading, and the waning liquidity of the market,

were reflected in extremely low turnover and widening spreads between the prices bid and the prices offered.

The spread on series 3, one of the worst affected tranches, increased from 30 cents to \$1.50 in Moscow. However, recently issued tranches, in which traders believe there are less likely to be stolen securities, traded more healthily.

Investment banks in the Emerging Markets Traders Association held a conference yesterday evening to co-ordinate their approach towards the crisis.

Western investment banks are expected to warn the Russian authorities that the freezing of bonds undermines the credibility

Continued on Page 22

### STOCK MARKET INDICES

FT-SE 100: 3,753.6 (-8.1)	US DOLLAR	NEW YORK LUNCHTIME
Yield: 4.04	New York LUNCHTIME	DM 1.834
FT-SE EUROSTOCK 100: 1,892.14 (-8.51)	London: 1,897 (1,229)	FF 5.1675
FT-SE A-SHARE: 1,894.58 (-0.29)	DM 2,340 (2,342)	SP 1.2295
Nikkei: 22,286.89 (+0.94)	DM 7,599 (7,597)	Y 108.975
Dow Jones Ind Ave: 6,446.67 (-11.09)	DM 1,822 (1,821)	London: 1,822 (1,822)
S & P Composite: 696.70 (-1.22)	DM 1,822 (1,821)	FF 5.166 (5,202)
	DM 1,822 (1,821)	SP 1.2295 (1,229)
	DM 1,822 (1,821)	Y 108.975 (108.14)
	DM 1,822 (1,821)	\$ Index 97.1 (97.5)
	DM 1,822 (1,821)	Tokyo close Y 108.33

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# The cost of a four-legged friend

Gerald Cadogan on houses for horses

Everything equine - racehorse, hunter or pony - is a luxury. And properties with good accommodation for horses are costly. If you intend buying a horse property, make sure you know what the previous owners used it for.

Horses need pasture, loose boxes, blankets, tack (saddles and fastenings) and winter feed.

The vet does not call for free. And riders wear a costly uniform. It can start as children, with a hacking jacket and Pony Club tie and graduate to full hunting rig. Add the expenses of livery (having the horse kept in stables) or employing a groom (in effect, one's own private livery), and the sums rise sharply.

Then one has to ride at meets or shows. A new horse box can easily cost up to \$80,000 - or more depending on how many extra comforts it has for the riders and/or grooms.

Even a humble trailer may cost £2,000.

The price of paddocks has gone up too. Since they are seen as amenity land, they are at a premium to agricultural land. Today they are likely to cost between \$4,000 and \$5,000 an acre, which is partly an effect of the rise in farmland prices. "I have even sold a paddock of under an acre at a rate of £10,000 an acre," says Ian McConnell of Savills. He added: "The first acre always costs most. If the land goes up to 4 or 5 acres, it reduces proportionately."

In spite of the bills, the British and the Irish unite in a love of horses and a readiness to spend large sums on the animals, whether directly or by proxy in the betting shop.

Before buying a horse property, do some homework. If the property was used for racehorse training, breeding and showjumping, or if the owner was a jockey, dressage-master, eventer, or rodeo regularly to hounds, the odds strengthen that it will be the sort of place where your horses will be comfortable.

An example in Ireland is Co-

ries at Bagenalstown in Co Carlow, a fine Georgian house near Mount Leinster which Jordan was due to bring to auction on Wednesday. Its previous owner was Denny Cordell-Lavarek who was in the rock 'n' roll business but turned - in good Irish fashion - to training horses and greyhounds. In 1990, he had the top Irish two-year-old. The yard at Carries has 25 loose boxes on 28 acres and there is an all-weather gallop on a further 16 acres.

Rock music and horses also combine at Huckenden Farm in the Chilterns, near High Wycombe. It belongs to Alvin Lee, guitarist of Ten Years After. Besides paddocks, stabling and a field shelter, the house boasts two recording studios. The price from Andrew Wilson is \$650,000.

A conventional horse property in prime hunting ground is Park House at Gaddesby, between Leicester and Melton Mowbray. This Georgian house with 11 acres is in the Queen's Friday country, and the Cotswolds, Belvoir and Ferns are in



Another stud for sale...

boxing distance. Such famous hunts make an enticing prospect. Fisher Hoggarth and Savills ask for \$550,000.

Also in Leicestershire, the home of Desert Orchid is for sale. This great steeplechaser was bred and brought up at the Manor House at Ab Kettleby, near Melton Mowbray (John D Wood in Oxford, \$250,000).

Or you could buy a place that produced a runner-up in the Grand National - Romney King in 1983. Queensford Farm is outside Dorchester-on-Thames, between Oxford and Henley. It also bred Couldn't Be Better which won the Hennessy Gold Cup in 1986. The house is Queen Anne and the price \$500,000 from Strutt &

Parker in Newbury. For those wishing to breed horses, Pat Eddery's Barretts town stud, built in the 1960s, near Aylesbury costs less with 72 acres (John D Wood in Oxford, \$500,000) than the first million pound yearling that it produced. Another stud for sale is Elmwell Park near Bury St

Edmunds (S & P in Ipswich, \$1.25m), which has bred or raised several winners of big races and was originally the home of the leading stallion, Indian Ridge. The price includes 120 acres and three cottages, as well as the expected foaling unit, stallion box, covering barn and covered exercise yard.

An equally good racing connection is the house that John Francome built 20 years ago, and later sold, near Lambourn in Berkshire. Windy Hollow (John D Wood in Winchester, \$525,000) comes with 22 loose boxes and an indoor school.

At Holyport, near Maidenhead in Berkshire, Lane Fox offers two houses - Belmont Farm and Great Oaks - with stabling that may appeal to those who want to ride in Windsor Great Park (with permit) rather than hunt. Both are priced at £750,000.

Farther from London, horse properties are cheaper. From the 32-acre Broadmead Farm at West Knolly (Humberts, \$575,000) one may hunt with the South & West Wilts, and the Portman and Blackmore Vale hunts are in boxing distance.

In Somerset, Foxgloves House near Withypool (Jackson-Stops, \$335,000) was built of Canadian cedar in 1937 in the heart of what is now the Exmoor National Park, with 17 acres and views down the Barle valley. Here you can chase foxes or ride out with the Devon and Somerset Stag-hounds.

Fisher Hoggarth, Market Harborough (01858-410200); Humberts, Shaftesbury (01471-833432); Jackson-Stops, Exeter (01392-214222); Jordan, Newbridge, Co Kildare (00353-45-433500); Lane Fox, Pangbourne (01734-945757); Andrew Wilson, Marlborough (01628-890707); Savills, Stamford (01780-662223); Strutt & Parker, Ipswich (01473-214941) and Newbury (01635-321707); John D Wood, Oxford (01865-311522) and Winchester (01962-863181).

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مكتبة المجلد



# US economy shows signs of faster growth

By Michael Proulx  
in Washington

US industrial production rose sharply for the second consecutive month in May, confirming an acceleration of economic growth, official figures indicated yesterday.

The Federal Reserve said industrial output rose by 0.7 per cent last month and 3.2 per cent in the year to May. Data for April were revised slightly to show a gain of 0.7 per cent, rather than 0.9 per cent as previously reported.

The increase was broadly based with sizeable gains in the output of business equipment and durable consumer goods.

However, the Fed said the figures were distorted by a weather-related surge in electricity production. Excluding electricity, output would have risen by 0.5 per cent last month.

Separate figures for business inventories showed a 0.4 per cent gain in April, marking the beginning of a rebound in company stocks that is expected to contribute positively to growth in coming months.

Yesterday's data confirmed other recent signs of faster growth including sharp increases in retail sales, home sales and payroll employment. Although reports this week on producer and consumer prices indicated inflationary pressures remain fairly well contained, many economists expect the Fed to begin raising short-term interest rates this summer.

Some analysts expect a move as soon as the Fed's policy meeting on July 2 and 3, but others expect the Fed to wait until August or even to defer rate increases until after the November election.

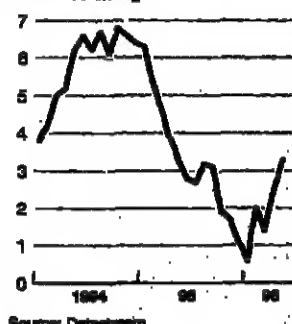
The case for an early rate increase is not to combat existing inflation, but to prevent above-trend economic growth putting upward pressure on inflation in the future.

Most economists expect growth at an annualised rate of 3.5-4.0 per cent in the second quarter, well above the economy's long-term potential of 2.25 per cent.

But there is disagreement on prospects for the second half of the year.

## US industrial production

Annual % change

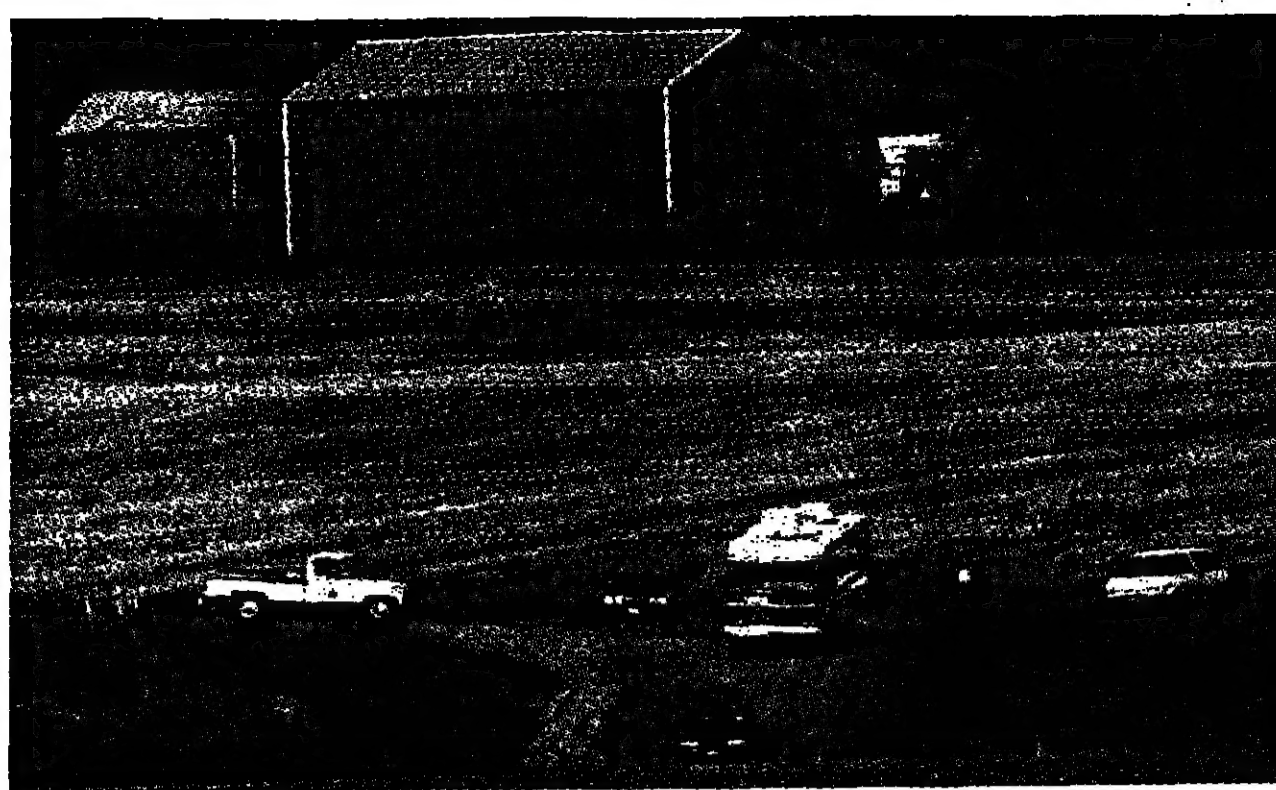


Source: Department of Commerce

The White House is confident that growth will subside naturally, making Fed action unnecessary.

But Wall Street economists warn that the economy could stay strong for longer than expected. "We will see a substantial increase in car production that will be the catalyst for a more general rise in manufacturing output," said Mr Edward McKelvey, a senior economist at Goldman Sachs in New York.

A similar surge in car production helped trigger a period of above-trend growth in 1994 that forced the Fed to tighten monetary policy aggressively.



Vehicles containing the 16 Freemen on their way to surrender after the FBI negotiated an end to the 81-day stand-off

## Peaceful end to Montana siege as authorities learn lessons of Waco

# Patience paid off, says FBI

By Jurek Martin in Washington

The FBI was yesterday basking in what has become an unaccustomed praise following Thursday night's peaceful end to its 81-day siege of a group of armed anti-government extremists holed up in a remote Montana farmhouse.

Mr Louis Freeh, the FBI's director, said on several morning television programmes that the policy of putting "patience above the risk of bloodshed" had been justified. Ms Janet Reno, the attorney general, said the Montana siege was "the first real test of the reforms instituted for resolving crisis situations."

Congressman Bill McCollum of Florida, chairman of the House committee which had investigated the bloody ends to the sieges of Ruby Ridge, Idaho, in 1992 and Waco, Texas, two years later, was equally complimentary. The

FBI, he said, had been right to avoid "a jump to judgment".

Mr Freeh emphasised that none of the pending criminal charges, including writing bogus checks and threatening public officials, against the self-styled "Freemen" had been dropped. Most of the 16 remaining in the farmhouse were arraigned yesterday.

The only concession in negotiations before the denouement was an agreement to place masses of documents, which the Freemen allege reveal government conspiracies on a grand scale, into the hands of a neutral party.

The FBI used a range of new tactics during the siege. Agents dressed casually and not in the black paramilitary uniforms seen at Waco, final redoubt of Mr David Koresh's cult, and Ruby Ridge, where Randy Weaver, a white supremacist, took refuge.

Military vehicles were rarely in evidence and roadblocks

were frequently moved so as to

lessen perceived threats. Non-government intermediaries were welcomed into the negotiations, fruitless though they turned out to be.

But both Mr Gritz and Mr Charles Duke, a rightwing Colorado state senator, emerged from their sessions to denounce the Freemen, thereby further diminishing the group's appeal to others of similar persuasion.

The Montana success, like the capture, also in Montana, of the Unabomber three months ago, helps the reputation of federal law enforcement. Waco and Ruby Ridge did not cast it in the best light and it has recently come under fire for sending over to the White House in 1993 assorted security files on prominent Republicans and for the direction of its inquiries into the

spate of arson attacks on black churches in the south.

## Arizona governor accused of extortion

By Christopher Parkes  
in Los Angeles

Mr Fife Symington, the bankrupt governor of Arizona, has been indicted on more than 20 extortion and fraud charges after a four-year investigation by a federal grand jury. Mr Symington rejected the accusations, and his political allies said they would block impeachment moves initiated by his opponents.

The former real estate magnate, who filed for bankruptcy last year with liabilities of \$24m and claimed assets of \$61,000, is accused of pleading poverty with prospective new lenders, he had no financial difficulties.

During electioneering campaigns he projected himself as the developer who had survived the real estate crisis which hit Phoenix in the late 1980s. He promised that, if elected, he would run the state as if it were his own business.

Mr Symington, who has repeatedly said he would not step down if indicted, was the target of an attempt to criminalise "errors and omissions" in his financial records and statements, his lawyer said. The governor is the second consecutive state leader to face serious charges. His predecessor, Mr Evan Mecham, was accused of lying over campaign funds and later forced out of office.

## Smog fighters take on the Big Country

Seven states have agreed action to clear the air above America's greatest spectacle

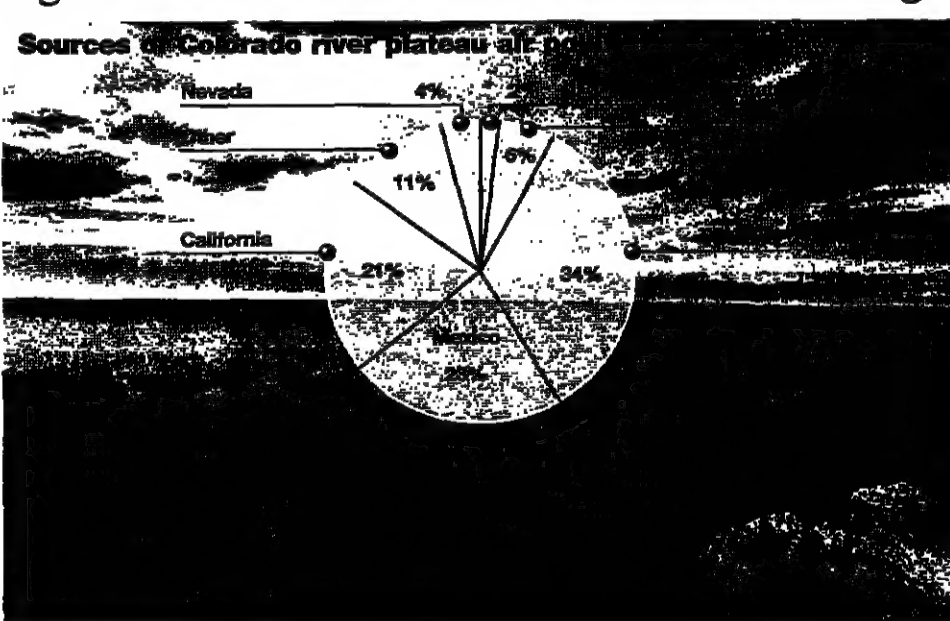
On a clear day you can see for ever, almost. But in Grand Canyon country on a bad day, visibility shrinks by more than half to about 70 miles. Landmarks lurk behind a veil of haze which blurs the landscape's outlines, flattens contrast, and dims the colours of North America's greatest natural spectacle.

Snapshots taken home by the canyon's 5m annual sightseers exaggerate the visual effect of the smog which creeps in from the booming economies of Arizona and neighbouring states.

The problem is worst in the peak holiday season, when winter's northerly winds ease and summer southerlies waft dirty air on to the Colorado River plateau - site of about 20 national parks - from Phoenix, Los Angeles and, increasingly, the fast-industrialising northern regions of Mexico.

Now, in a rare spirit of co-operation, seven western states and four native American tribes have agreed to collaborate to clear the air. An accord, as tenuous as it is sweeping, was signed this week, embracing 70 measures, ranging from cutting power plant and vehicle emissions to curbing scrub burning on Indian grazing lands.

Only Nevada, home to allegedly the dirtiest power plant in the region, withheld its approval. Even so, its coal-fired Mohave generating station at Laughlin near the western end of the canyon, is to be included in a study of future restrictions



under federal auspices.

A memorandum from Nevada described as unjustified a recommendation to cap emissions by law if voluntary limits were not met. It added that the cost of the measures, estimated at up to \$1.8bn a year, was not acceptable, on the grounds that improvements might be "imperfectible".

The aim - to improve average visibility on the plateau by 10 per cent over the next 30 years - seems modest. But holding the line at that level is likely to require efforts even more extraordinary than the five years' negotiation needed to reach this week's consensus.

Population in the west is forecast to double in the next 50 years, to 100m. Additional demand for electricity in the next 20 years - estimated by environmental groups at 15,000MW, or enough for 7.5m homes - will further strain the pollution consensus in a region rich in coal. Atmospheric burdens will be increased by building work, rising car traffic, and road dust, currently blamed for 20 per cent of the murk.

California, despite its role as regional leader in pollution control, contributes more than 20 per cent of the pollutants. However, it was warmest in welcoming the deal if only because it effectively endorsed

its pioneering approach.

The backing of neighbouring states will increase the pressure on the federal Environmental Protection Agency - which is considering the proposal's national implications - to impose strict national limits on vehicle emissions similar to those in California.

Interest in preservation of the region's natural attractions is already strong in Washington. Two months ago President Bill Clinton ordered the Federal Aviation Administration to limit sightseeing flights over the Grand Canyon following the failure of flight-path restrictions imposed in the late 1980s to keep down the buzz-

ings of six local aircraft and three helicopter operators. Tour companies, which claim 800,000 visitors viewed the canyon from the air in 1995, have seen their business almost double in the past 10 years.

More than 80 diesel buses also bring tourists to the canyon every day. With the annual visitor load conservatively forecast to rise by 50 per cent to 7.5m by 2010, moves are already under way to improve the local environment by limiting private vehicle access.

Three electric shuttle buses are due to be delivered to the hard-up Grand Canyon park authority this summer. But hopes for more government cash than the current \$1m a year for the National Park Service are slim. It already claims to be labouring with a maintenance spending backlog of \$4bn.

The one hope is an embryonic bill, backed by the administration, to allow corporate sponsorship in national parks.

Proponents have suggested a \$10m annual limit for each sponsor, and reckon the measure could raise \$100m a year. Early opponents, mostly environmental groups, do not object to concepts such as the Marlboro Marlbus, on the basis that small is beautiful and that in anti-pollution matters every little helps. But they are concerned that sponsors will demand a bigger bang for their bucks, and draw the line at Yahoo's Yosemite or the Grand Coca-Cola Canyon.

Christopher Parkes

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DIGEST

# Sun-Diamond in bribes case

Sun-Diamond, California's leading fruit and nut marketing co-operative, has been accused of making illegal payments to Mr Mike Espy, former US agriculture secretary, and giving his brother unlawful campaign contributions. The group is known worldwide for products such as Sun-Maid raisins and Diamond walnuts. Mr Espy, who has not been formally charged, has been under investigation since he resigned his federal post in late 1994.

The indictment alleged Mr Espy received money and gifts worth up to \$9,000 from a Sun-Diamond "senior officer". Although it made no specific accusations of corruption, it said three of the co-operative's members had received government funds for export promotion. At the time, the co-op was actively lobbying to slow the planned phase-out of methyl bromide, a widely used fumigant suspected of helping destroy the ozone layer.

Lawyers representing Mr Espy and Sun-Diamond executives dismissed the accusations as "sneaky" attempts, and emphasised that the former secretary and Mr Richard Douglas, a former top executive at Sun-Diamond had been friends for 25 years. The \$5,913 of gifts at the centre of the probe included a set of luggage, tennis match tickets, a crystal bowl and a framed picture.

Christopher Parkes, Los Angeles

## Greek airport finance agreed

Greece yesterday signed a DM4.1bn (\$2.7bn) financing package for construction of Athens's new international airport, due to open at the end of 2000. The package, a mix of public and private funding, includes a DM1.9bn loan from the European Investment Bank and DM610bn in commercial loans from a consortium of international banks led by Bayerische Vereinsbank. The Greek government will provide DM199m and DM20m in grants. Another DM450m will come from the EU's Cohesion Fund for improving transport in poorer member states. The remainder will be covered by equity contributions from a consortium comprising Hochtief, ABB, Calor, Emag, Schaltegger and H. Krantz.

The airport, intended to become a hub for south-eastern Europe, will be managed by Flughafen Frankfurt. The Greek state has a 55 per cent stake in the Athens Airport Company, a joint venture with the Hochtief consortium which will operate the airport for 30 years. Construction work started this month at Spata, 25km from Athens, on a site cleared 15 years ago when the airport project was first launched. The new airport will handle 15m passengers a year at first and the existing airport at Hellinikon will close.

Kerin Hope, Athens

## Israeli inflation misses target

Israel's annual inflation rate rose to 13.4 per cent in May, from 11.6 per cent the month before, the Central Bureau of Statistics said yesterday. The monthly rise, 1.7 per cent, remained unchanged from the April figure. The Israeli government target is to keep annual inflation below 10 per cent. "The new statistics look very bad. It is an indication that the new government has to move very fast if it wants to keep the inflation on track. Budget cuts are needed now," said Mr Amir Barnea, professor of finance at the Tel Aviv University Business School.

It is unclear how the Israeli prime-minister-elect, Mr Benjamin Netanyahu, will be able to make these budget cuts, estimated at \$1.5bn, while at the same time satisfying the demands of his coalition partners to pump billions of dollars into West Bank Jewish settlements, religious institutions and aid for immigrants.

Yaronas Trafiimov, Jerusalem

## Bundesrat blocks telecom bill

The German government's bill to liberalise telecommunications was blocked yesterday by the Bundesrat, the second chamber representing the federal states (Länder), after passing the Bundestag, the lower house, by a large majority. A special arbitration committee of the two houses will now have to resolve the differences.

Yesterday's upset, and the resulting delay were condemned by Mr Wolfgang Bötsch, the post and telecommunications minister, as "incomprehensible" and "unacceptable". He said "billions of D-Marks of investment in Germany" hinged on the legislation, which is to set the terms for competition in the German telecoms market from January 1 1998.

The Bundesrat called for arbitration on 22 points. It wants a bigger role for the states over the licensing of new telecom companies and the regulation of the market, and it objects that the bill does not take sufficient account of radio, which is regulated by the states.

Peter Norman, Bonn

## Australia drops tax reform

The Australian government was yesterday forced to drop its plan to add about A\$1.2bn (US\$962.30m) a year to federal coffers by removing the wholesale sales tax exemption enjoyed by Australia's states, territories and local authorities. Instead, it accepted a compromise proposal that the states forgo promised increases in their funding from the federal government for the next 30 months.

The federal government is looking to prune A\$8bn from its own expenditures over the next five years in an effort to bring the federal budget into balance. Grants to the states, which have relatively few taxing powers of their own, are a big expenditure item, and federal officials had been insisting that a contribution would have to be made in this area.

A number of states said they were considering special short-term tax levies, to cover the federal funding shortfall.

Nikki Tait, Sydney

## Hong Kong air pact is agreed

Britain and China have concluded a new air services agreement covering Hong Kong, which gives additional routes to the territory's airlines and new rights to mainland carriers. Under the agreement, announced yesterday, Dragonair can operate new services to five Chinese cities from Hong Kong. The move marks a significant expansion in the carrier's operations and comes just days after shareholder approval of agreements giving mainland companies a controlling stake.

The reorganisation of the airline's capital gives the largest shareholding to CNAC, the commercial arm of China's aviation regulator.

Cathay Pacific, the territory's de facto flag carrier, has been awarded the right to fly over Chinese airspace for its main services to Europe, North America and to Hanoi. This will save time and costs, reducing the flight time to London, for example, by up to two hours.

John Ridding, Hong Kong

## Argentina cancels IBM contract

IBM said yesterday it would "vigorously do what is necessary to protect our rights" after Argentina's state-owned Banco Nación cancelled a \$249m contract to computerise its 525 branches. The ill-fated 1994 contract is the subject of a criminal investigation which has already led to the indictment of 30 IBM and Argentine government officials on suspicion of defrauding the state. Banco Nación suspended the contract citing the "impossibility of completing the [contract's] objectives".

The bank, which has already paid \$80m to IBM, is expected to seek compensation. The US company is likely to counter-sue.

David Pilling, Buenos Aires

## Russian general in Nato threat

General Pavel Grachev, Russia's defence minister, called yesterday for closer co-operation between his country and Nato in Bosnia and elsewhere - as long as the western alliance does not enlarge. In a change of Russian tactics, Gen. Grachev avoided referring to Moscow's likely retaliation in the event of Nato enlargement, and stressed the benefits to European security if the idea of expansion was abandoned. However, western defence ministers meeting in Brussels insisted expansion would proceed.

Bruce Clark, Brussels

## CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

IN PURCHASING THE ASSETS OF  
"GREEK INDUSTRY OF READY MADE GARMENTS B. ROCANAS  
BROS. S.A." OF ATHENS GREECE

ETHNIKI KEPHALEDOU S.A. Administration of Assets and Liabilities of 9a Chrysopolitani Str., Athens 10560, Greece, in its capacity as Liquidator of "Greek Industry of Ready Made Garments B. Rocanas Bros S.A.", a company with its registered office in Athens, Greece, (the "Company"), presently under special liquidation according to the provisions of Article 46a of Law 1892/1990, by virtue of Decision 5217/96 of the Athens Court of Appeal on the petition filed to admit within twenty (20) days from the publication of this call, non-binding written expressions of interest for the purchase of the assets mentioned below, which are being sold as a single entity.

## BRIEF INFORMATION

The Company was established in 1970. On 25.5.1996 it was placed under special liquidation. Its activities included the production, importation and disposal of ready made garments both in the domestic and in foreign markets.

## ASSETS OFFERED FOR SALE

The assets offered for sale include a plot of land in the Municipality of Ailintou (4, Ancient Theatre Street), the area of which originally amounted to 7,883.4 sq.m., having been reduced to approximately 6,834.35 sq.m. following expropriation, a plot consisting of a basement of approx. 2,157 sq.m., ground floor of approx. 4,990.60 sq.m., and first floor of approx. 4,990.60 sq.m., machinery, mechanical equipment, a car, a van, the Company's registered trademark, and any other assets as may be found to belong to the Company. It should be noted that the Company plant is leased out to third parties.

## SALES PROCEDURE

The Company's assets will be sold by way of Public Auction in accordance with the provisions of Article 46a of Law 1892/1990, (as supplemented by art. 14 of L.3001/1991) and subsequently amended) and the terms set out in the Call for tenders for the sale of the above assets, to be published in the Greek and foreign press on the dates provided by law.

For the submission of Expressions of Interest and for obtaining a copy of the Offering Memorandum, please contact the Liquidator, "ETHNIKI KEPHALEDOU S.A. Administration of Assets and Liabilities", 9a Chrysopolitani Str., Athens 10560 GREECE, Tel. +30-1-725-1884-87, fax: +30-1-321-7905 (afternoon Mrs. Mavrika Frangoulis).

## Nigerian police question family of jailed presidential candidate

By Paul Adams in Lagos

A dozen members of the family of Mr Moshod Abiola, the jailed Nigerian presidential candidate, have been questioned in the investigation into the murder of his senior wife, Kudirat, and five have been detained, police said yesterday.

"I cannot mention names or say that any of them are suspects, but it is an avenue we have to follow," said Mr Archibong Nkama, the police chief leading the murder hunt.

Mr Abiola's family are to make a joint statement this weekend about the murder.

At least five of Mr Abiola's relatives, including his brother Mubashiru (the present head of

the family) and his eldest son, Kola, are in detention. Kola has been leading efforts to negotiate the release of his father.

Mr Abiola, winner of the annulled 1993 presidential election, was detained two years ago and charged with treason for declaring himself president. He is in solitary confinement in Abuja, the capital, and is said to be still unaware of the death of his wife.

Mrs Abiola died last month from gunshot wounds after gunmen attacked her car as she was being driven to her home in Lagos.

Earlier this year a row broke out between Mrs Abiola and Kola, her stepson, over which

lawyer should defend Mr Abiola. Ms Hafsat Abiola, the politician's eldest daughter by Kudirat who is studying in the US, has already called on the government to release Kola and find the real killers.

"The family are giving every assistance to the police because they have promised to carry out a thorough investigation," said Dr Ore Falomo, Mr Abiola's doctor.

"They are seeing everyone in the family but they say that they haven't yet found a lead. But the family are hoping for a quick conclusion to this line of questioning and then that their efforts will be directed towards the real killers. Until we know who they are, we don't know

who is going to be next."

Mrs Abiola's murder, in which her driver was also killed, resembled the work of trained killers and the police have ruled out armed robbery. There have been several unexplained killings of prominent opposition figures in Nigeria in the past nine months.

Born into poverty, Mr Abiola moonlighted as a singer to pay for his studies and rose to be one of Africa's wealthiest men, owning a publishing empire, an airline, farms and numerous other businesses.

His flamboyant 1993 election campaign was lubricated by vast wealth. His popularity was helped by years of philanthropy.



# Deputy PM appeals to accountants on liability

By Jim Kelly,  
Accountancy Correspondent

Mr Michael Heseltine, the deputy prime minister, has launched an 11th-hour attempt to stop accountancy firms registering off-shore in the island of Jersey to protect partners' personal wealth from litigation.

At a private meetings at the Cabinet Office some of the so-called "Big Six" firms were

asked if they would reconsider off-shore registration if the protection offered by Jersey was available in the UK. Further meetings are planned.

It is understood that the accountants were told that Mr Heseltine feared that the off-shore option was a threat to the reputation and competitiveness of the City of London. All but two of the FTSE 100 companies are audited by the Big Six accountancy firms.

The Jersey parliament is due next week to debate a bill which would allow the big firms to register as limited liability partnerships. Under this law the firms are still liable, as are negligent partners, but the personal wealth of other partners in the firm is not at risk.

The Big Six firms claim that up to 8 per cent of their turnover goes on litigation costs - including meeting claims and insurance. They say the current law is unfair and could lead to a catastrophic claim wiping out a large firm. They want the legal risks of auditing reduced.

The UK Department of Trade and Industry is considering measures which could limit professional liability in the UK including limited liability partnerships. Mr Heseltine's intervention is seen as increasing the chances of rapid reform.

So far two firms have shown a clear interest in Jersey. Ernst & Young's 380 partners will vote on registering in Jersey this autumn. Price Waterhouse, with 400 partners, is also expected to put the move to partners this year. Several firms from other professions, such as actuaries, were expected to follow.

Limited liability partnerships can be set up under UK law but are severely restricted in their practical use. It is understood the government is considering the possibility that the current partnership law could be amended quickly.

However, the firms, which have been campaigning for legal reforms for several years, are likely to stick with the Jersey option until the government makes a clear commitment. They are also certain to go on pressing for fundamental reform of the liability laws.

Other accountants are uncertain whether the ministry's interest in the Taurus is real, or whether the missile is being used as a stalking horse to force other companies to cut prices.

The other main European contender is the British Aerospace-British Aerospace. The competition now moves to be assessed by other government departments, with a final decision expected next month.

## Cash gifts to Labour party increase sharply

By Jimmy Burns in London

The opposition Labour party is recording a big rise in private donations as the next general election draws closer, say senior party officials.

Donations, excluding trade union dues and membership subscriptions, are expected to total a record of \$5.5m (\$10m) this year compared with \$5.5m last year and \$3.7m in 1994, according to internal party estimates. The party's over-draft disappeared last year thanks to higher membership dues and tighter control on spending. "We are becoming more professional in our fundraising in the run-up to the next election," said Mr Mike Cunningham, the party's head of fundraising.

The identity of some of Labour's backers caught up in this "new professionalism" remain shrouded in secrecy, but details emerged yesterday of the party's plans for one of its most ambitious fundraising

events - an extensive gala dinner at London's Savoy Hotel on July 11.

The 450 tickets for the dinner - priced at \$20 (\$75) each - are believed to have sold within a month of information about the event being circulated to sympathisers such as the film director Sir Richard Attenborough and novelist Ruth Rendell.

The organisers are hoping to boost income from the event by drawing in corporate sponsors. In addition to a "champagne reception", sponsors are being sought for the wine, after-dinner drinks or cognac and chocolate.

Ms Jacqui Christian, of Hobbs Macatay Communication Ltd, the co-ordinator of the event, refused to release the full guest list yesterday.

"This is a private function. People who have bought tickets have asked not to have their names disclosed," she said. Guests who agreed to release their names included



Margaret Thatcher in 1990 at her last Conservative party conference as prime minister; her speeches are not always welcomed in the party today. On Thursday Mr John Major, her successor as premier, publicly rebuked her for the first time. He spoke after she had made a substantial donation to a Eurosceptic campaigning group run by Mr Bill Cash, a backbench Conservative MP. "Personally I would have given the money to the Conservative party," Mr John Major said, ending 24 years of turning the other cheek when his predecessor has appeared to undermine him. Mr Cash disclosed on Tuesday that he was receiving financial support from Sir James Goldsmith, who has set up a political party, the Referendum party, to fight the next British general election.

Mr Peter Harper, a director of Hanson, Mr Bruce Shepherd, managing director of Shephard, Offshore, and Mr Swir Paul, chairman of Caparo, the steel

## Bidders for cruise missile order are urged to cut prices

By Bernard Gray,  
Defence Correspondent

The UK Ministry of Defence has asked competitors bidding for a \$550m (\$950m) cruise missile contract for last-minute price cuts in an unusual move which intensifies the battle for the order.

The move follows a strong showing by the Taurus missile, offered by Daimler-Benz Aerospace and Bofors of Sweden, which has proved the cheapest offering.

However, the Taurus team has not signed up any large British defence companies as partners, thereby weakening the political credentials of its bid.

Some officials at the ministry are also concerned that while Taurus has a good specification on paper, not all development issues may have been overlooked.

As a result of the strong showing of Taurus, the ministry has asked several of the

competitors to review the price of their bids, and the capabilities which their missiles can offer.

This request followed a review of the competition last week by the ministry's Equipment Advisory Committee.

Other contenders are uncertain whether the ministry's interest in the Taurus is real, or whether the missile is being used as a stalking horse to force other companies to cut prices.

The other main European contender is the British Aerospace-British Aerospace. The competition now moves to be assessed by other government departments, with a final decision expected next month.

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competitors to review the price of their bids, and the capabilities which their missiles can offer.

## British Gas attacks regulator over proposal to restrict prices

The prospect of a long Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry into British Gas pipeline charges looked increasingly likely yesterday after the company launched a swinging attack on industry regulator Ofgas. Robert Corzine writes.

Executives said that controversial price control proposals published by Ofgas last month were "ill conceived,

damaging to British Gas shareholders and not in the overall interests of gas consumers."

Ms Ilara Spottiswoode, the gas industry regulator, published a tough pricing formula last month for Transco, the British Gas pipeline division, which she said would reduce the average household gas bill of around by \$30 (\$46) a year, or 10 per

cent, rising to \$50 over five years.

Mr Philip Rogerson, deputy chairman of British Gas, yesterday said the proposals "assume reductions in costs... which cannot be achieved". They would also undermine the company's capacity to pay its dividend. He accused Ofgas of having conducted a "theoretical exercise that was intellectually

saved... and which had little link to the real world."

Executives claimed that the proposed cuts in capital and operating expenditure would threaten the smooth introduction of full gas competition for 19m gas consumers in 1998. They would also put at risk the safety of the national gas grid, one of the country's most important

infrastructure networks.

Mr Rogerson added that the Ofgas plan would cut British Gas's asset base by \$6bn to \$28bn, and slash Transco's profits by \$500m by 2002. Ofgas, which in recent weeks has received letters from around 50,000 angry British Gas shareholders, said it would not respond to individual allegations from the company.

### UK NEWS DIGEST

## Paper torrent swamps Names

LLOYD'S

Lloyd's of London yesterday began swamping its 34,000 Names with more than 50 tonnes of paperwork as the countdown began towards implementation of its recovery plan this summer. Most important for Names - individuals whose assets have traditionally supported Lloyd's - will be personalised statements being dispatched next Thursday showing the impact on them of the complex recovery plan. The offer will offset the cost to Names of meeting their losses and of setting up Equitas, a reinsurance company to take responsibility for billions of dollars of mainly US asbestos and pollution liabilities. With an accompanying 220-page settlement information document, each package will weigh more than 1kg.

Without sufficient support from Names this summer, Lloyd's future will be in doubt. The latest figure will show some 88 per cent of Names better off compared with initial statements sent in March. Only 1.6 per cent will be worse off by more than \$15,000. *Ralph Atkins, Insurance Correspondent*

### Tax rules are out of line

The UK found itself out of line on accounting for tax yesterday when the board of the International Accounting Standards Committee, meeting in Stockholm, voted broadly in favour of full provisioning for deferred tax. The vote needs to be ratified in September at the IASC's meeting in Barcelona. The debate on the issue is split between those who believe accounts should reflect the tax ultimately payable on profits, even if it will not be paid for many years, and those who want accounts to reflect actual cash payments of tax. The IASC backed the former. Current UK practice allows a subjective process of "partial provisioning" which allows directors to judge when liabilities will crystallise. The UK's standard setters have tentatively suggested a milder form of full provisioning - although many UK businesses are still hostile.

*Jim Kelly, Accountancy Correspondent*

### Accountant is made a dame

The chief executives of five top 100 companies are knighted in today's Queen's birthday honours list. City of London figures honouring Mr John Craven, chairman of Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, who becomes a knight, and Ms Sheila Masters, a partner at KPMG and arguably Britain's leading woman accountant, who is made a dame. Business knights include Mr Nigel Rudd, who built up Williams Holdings and is now chairman of Pilkington and East Midlands Electricity; Mr Clive Thompson, chief executive of Rankholl; Mr David Barnes, chief executive of Zeneca; Mr Dick Evans, chief executive of British Aerospace; and Mr Brian Moffat, chairman and chief executive of British Steel.

There is also a knighthood for Mr James Hann, the popular former chairman of Scottish Nuclear who was asked to step down as part of last year's merger with Nuclear Electric to form British Energy. *David Wighton, Westminster*

### 24-hour mail strike next week

The first national postal strike for nearly a decade will start on Thursday evening, when Royal Mail delivery and sorting staff begin a 24-hour stoppage. The strike was called by the CWU postal workers' union after another round of talks with Royal Mail on pay and conditions broke down - principally over management's insistence on the need for increased flexibility through team working. Mr Richard Dykes, managing director of Royal Mail, said that he was very disappointed with the strike decision. *Andrew Bolger, Employment Correspondent*

### COMPANIES AND FINANCE: UK

## Delta shares fall 33p on first-half warning

By Tim Burt

Shares in Delta yesterday fell 33p to 360p after the cables and engineering group warned that volatile copper prices and sluggish demand in the construction industry would undermine first-half profits.

The company, which holds about 11,000 tonnes of copper for its cablemaking activities, said its interim profits to June 30 would be "appreciably below" the \$2m reported in the second half of last year.

Mr Robert Easton, chief executive, said Delta had written down the value of its copper stocks by \$3m and embarked on a \$5m rationalisation programme.

The cost-cutting, coming hard on the heels of an 11m restructuring last year, is

expected to involve about 300 job losses and the closure of one of the group's UK plants. It will also reduce overcapacity in Germany, where "extreme and prolonged" winter weather conditions depressed demand from the building industry.

Although Mr Easton predicted a "bounce back" in the second halfmost analysts cut their full-year profit forecasts from about 7m to \$5m.

"Every year we start off with reasonable expectations only to be disappointed," said Mr Richard Dyt at Henderson Crosthwaite.

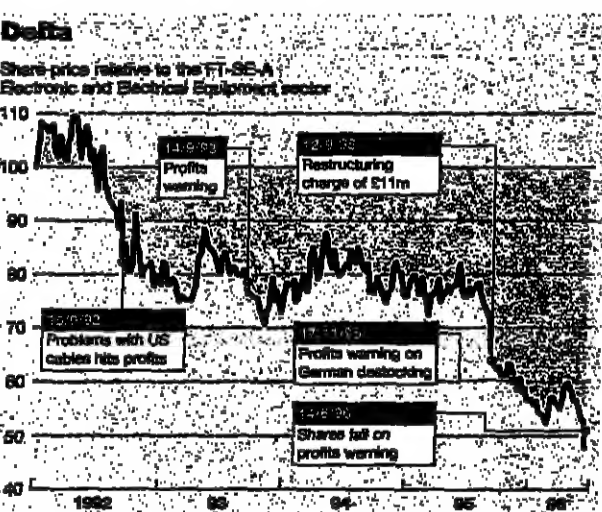
Ms Katie Still at NatWest Securities warned that there was "no guarantee that Delta's markets would not deteriorate further".

Last year, customer destocking and fluctuating raw material prices pushed profits in Delta's cables arm down from \$1.5m to \$700,000.

The company, however, predicted it would recoup its inventory write-downs in the second half of this year by maintaining selling prices to cable customers in the construction and telecommunications industries.

Mr Easton said the reorganisation of Delta's German engineering and circuit protection operations and UK wiring accessories business would lead to annual cost savings of \$5m.

He added that the company did not expect to make further large restructuring provisions this year. Some analysts suggested that was over-optimistic.



It did not write down its copper stocks according to changes in the spot price and therefore was not subject to the same vagaries on the value of its inventories. Nevertheless, BICC shares fell 11p to 327p on market fears that its cablemaking margins could be squeezed.

Other cablemakers, such as BICC and Alcatel Alsthom, have pushed through hefty restructuring in recent months and could undercut Delta's selling prices. BICC said that, unlike Delta,

## NatWest raises £464m in 3i sale

By George Graham,  
Banking Correspondent

National Westminster Bank yesterday raised \$464m (\$710m) from the sale of its 17.7 per cent stake in 3i, the venture capital group.

The 104.3m shares were placed, primarily with institutional investors, by NatWest Securities and de Zoete & Bevan, the broking arm of Barclays.

3i's share price had been weighed down by the prospect of the sale, and it recovered yesterday, closing \$p up at 455p. Dealers said orders had been scaled back slightly.

NatWest was the last large bank to retain its full stake in 3i, which was founded after the second world war by the UK clearing banks and the Bank of England to provide capital to growing businesses.

Other banks had sold out or scaled back their stakes after 3i's flotation in 1994, though Barclays retains 5 per cent and Bank of Scotland 2 per cent.

The sale proceeds, slightly more than analysts had expected, will increase NatWest's Tier 1 capital ratio by 0.3 percentage points. The ratio stood at 6.7 per cent at December 31, but has been significantly altered by NatWest's recent series of acquisitions and disposals, including the \$550m purchase this week of Greenwich Capital, a US bond broker, and the sale of the bank's Spanish retail banking arm.

## Solid 'yes' vote for merger of Royal and Sun

By Ralph Atkins and  
John Authors

Shareholders in Royal Insurance and Sun Alliance yesterday voted overwhelmingly for the \$6bn (\$9.18bn) merger of the two insurance companies, significantly reducing the chances of the deal being wrecked by a late third-party entrant.

The merger, which will create the largest UK composite insurer - selling both life and general products - is now expected to be completed on July 19, subject to court and regulatory approval.

At an extraordinary meeting in London, 10,067 Royal Insurance shareholders, representing 300.3m shares, voted in favour of the merger with 383 shareholders, representing a total of 818,783 shares, voting against.

At Sun Alliance's EGM a few hours later, the group's shareholders voted in favour by a majority of about 40m votes. The strong shareholder support makes unlikely - but not impossible - a late bid by another insurer for either company in the hope of blocking the creation of a group with a 20 per cent share of the UK market.

Mr Roger Taylor, Sun Alliance chief executive who would become executive deputy chairman in merged group, said that Royal & Sun Alliance "will be a new global force in insurance, better able

to respond to the challenges in the mature UK market and to take advantage of growth opportunities overseas."

The Sun Alliance meeting took less than 10 minutes to approve, without questions, four motions relating to the deal.

But Royal Insurance had a bumpy ride. Mr Allan Cornally, chairman, faced repeated questioning for an hour about the safeguards for staff, before the motions allowing the merger to proceed were passed.

Mr Cornally defended the decision to announce that 4,000 UK job losses were likely, saying that it was best to be "up front" rather than allow morale to be undermined by speculation.

He also denied claims that Royal was the "junior partner" in the merger, and would lose its identity after 150 years of history.

It was "really a merger of equals", he said, although Sun Alliance had the larger market capitalisation at the time the deal was agreed.

Mr Cornally also hinted that the two groups were confident of satisfying competition regulators over one possible concern - the combined groups' dominance of specialist boiler engineering insurance.

"We haven't yet encountered any significant difficulties, and we aren't expecting to. We expect to win the argument," he said.

## Bula moves on Russian dispute

By Jane Martinson

Bula Resources, the Dublin-based oil exploration and production company, has moved to end uncertainties over its activities in Siberia by severing its links with a Russian company and demanding the departure of two directors.

A dispute between the Russian Transcontinental Financial-Industrial Corporation and Akti-Otyr, a joint stock company with a licence to produce oil in Siberia, had resulted in complicated litigation which Bula felt was affecting its right to 51 per cent of Akti-Otyr.

Yesterday Bula agreed to pay the Russian Corporation \$2.1m (\$1.87m) over an 18-month period for its disputed share of Akti-Otyr.

In return, the Russian Corporation has agreed to sell 71.9m Bula shares, representing 4.8 per cent, while two Russian directors of Bula, Mr Alexander Marichev and Ms Tatyana Kirillova, will resign.

The proceeds of the share sale, likely to exceed the settlement sum, will go to Bula.

## S American joint ventures for BPB

By Andrew Taylor,  
Construction Correspondent

BPB Industries, Europe's biggest plasterboard manufacturer, yesterday announced its first substantial investment in South America.

The UK company has agreed to form a series of plasterboard and plaster joint ventures to develop the South American market with Matte Group, the Chilean family-owned industrial and financial conglomerate.

The first ventures will be in Chile and in Brazil, where BPB has a small marketing operation.

The group has agreed to pay up to \$58m to buy between 21.3 per cent and 28.2 per cent of El Volcan, a leading Chilean gypsum company in which Matte currently has a 53 per cent stake.

The eventual size of the combined stake has yet to be decided, but will be on the basis of 60:40 in Matte's favour, said Mr Jean Pierre Cuny, BPB's chief executive.

In a separate move, BPB and El Volcan announced plans to build a \$20m plasterboard plant in São Paulo, Brazil.

As part of the deal El Volcan

will take a 45 per cent stake in Placo do Brasil, previously wholly owned by BPB. The share of subsequent investments in South America will be on the same proportion as the Brazil deal, said Mr Cuny.

It is the first substantial move outside of Europe by BPB since Mr Cuny was appointed chief executive in 1994.

The group last year unsuccessfully bid \$1.12bn for National Gypsum, the second largest US plasterboard manufacturer.

Mr Cuny said yesterday: "It

is our intention to become a large world manufacturer of plasterboard. This would involve having a presence in major markets, such as North and South America and south-east Asia - but only when and where this is financially viable."

He said South American plasterboard sales were tiny outside Chile, where consumption was running at just over 1 sq metre a head, compared with about 3 sq metres in western Europe and 9 sq metres in North America.

BPB supplies about half of European sales.

## Select cash call for US buys

By Jane Martinson

Select Appointments, a USM-quoted international recruitment agency is to raise \$24.6m (\$37.83m) via an open offer of shares, partly to cover the purchase of its US recruitment agencies for \$30m.

The offer of 8.8m new shares at 250p is available to existing holders on a 1-for-7.26 basis. The shares rise 14p to 270p yesterday.

About \$10m of the proceeds will be spent on further in-fill acquisitions.

Mr Tony Martin, chairman, said: "In the past three years, we have been putting our footprints down around the world so that we can build a diversified recruitment group. Now we are focusing on organic growth and complementary acquisitions."

Select is buying the two west coast-based agencies - Toner and Placement Pros - from the founding shareholders.

It said the deal would enable its US business to offer a nationwide service.

The group, which is aiming for a full listing this summer, operates 34 companies in 18 countries.

Waverley, a group of Swiss investors which rescued Select in 1991 and which retains a 66 per cent stake, has agreed to pay \$16.5m for its share of the new offer.

The balance is underwritten by brokers Granville Davies.

### RESULTS

	Turnover (£m)	Pre-tax profit (£m)	EPS (p)	Current payment (p)	Date of payment	Dividends corresponding dividend	Total for year	Total for year
Andrews Bros.	6 mths to Mar 30	42.2 (38.8)	2.21 (2.11)	1.4 (1.34)	0.75	Sept 2	0.75	1,825
Beane Electrical	6 mths to Mar 31	26.5 (27.4)	1.45 (1.71)	5.36 (6.36)	0.65	Aug 8	0.55	2,550
Forster & Co	6 mths to Mar 31	0.837 (-)	0.21 (-)	7.71 (-)	-	-	-	-
Fuller & Smith	Yr to Mar 30	91.4 (85.3)	10.09 (8.77)	30.18 (25.2)	6.3	Aug 19	5.725	8,225
Goldman & Little	Yr to Mar 31	27.7 (28.1)	4.26 (3.84)	42.77 (37.04)	7.5	July 26	6	24,52
Green & Sander's	Yr to Mar 30	138.2 (137.7)	15.89 (15.24)	130.9 (43)	8.01	July 29	8.19	12,87
Smith	Yr to Mar 31	4.46 (4.14)	0.232 (0.308)	8.47 (11.31)	1.75	3	1.75	3
Teleflex Electric	Yr to Mar 31	1,332 (1,438)	219.39 (217)	71.42 (78.1)	27.3	Oct 1	27.42	36,180
								30,42
	NAV	Attributable earnings (£m)	EPS (p)	Current payment (p)	Date of payment	Corresponding dividend	Total for year	Total for year
Accord Management	6 mths to Mar 31	102.1 (95)	0.009 (0.016)	0.141 (0.51)	-	-	-	0.593
Capital Gearing	Yr to Apr 5	881.4 (848.7)	0.019 (0.015)	0.75 (0.79)	0.55	July 9	0.55	0.5
Matheson Lloyd's	Yr to Mar 31	101.01 (92.54)	0.01 (0.077)	2.44 (0.31)	0.2	Aug 18	0.6	0.6

Dividends shown basic. Dividends shown net. Figures in brackets are for corresponding period. \*Equivalent after allowing for scrip issue. †40m stock. \$USM stock. ‡After exceptional items. After exceptional credit. †Excludes special of 12.5p (4p). ‡0m reduced capital. †0m increased capital. ‡Excludes special and after share consolidation. †Comparatives for four years.

Earnings shown basic. Dividends shown net. Figures in brackets are for corresponding period. \*Equivalent after showing for scrip issue. @40m stock. \$US\$ stock. @After exceptional charge. @After exceptional credit. @Excludes special and after share consolidation. @Increased capital. @Excludes special and after share consolidation. @Comparatives for four months.

مكتبة المجلد



## COMPANIES AND FINANCE

## Finnair shares slide 9% on warning

By Greg Mcivor in Stockholm

Shares in Finnair plunged 9 per cent yesterday after the Helsinki-based airline said slower growth in traffic and higher costs would trigger a "substantial decline" in profits for the current financial year.

Mr Antti Potila, chief executive, said growth in turnover and sales volume in the year to end-March 1997 would fall short of that in the previous period because of slower economic activity in Finland and key European markets.

"For airlines, sustaining a

good level of profitability with growth under present conditions is nearly impossible," Mr Potila said. "If there is no growth, restructuring soon becomes necessary."

Finnair's shares fell FM23.3 to FM22.2. The company said passenger volumes in April rose 4 per cent, compared with double digit growth in the previous period. International scheduled flights, Finnair's most profitable segment, rose only 0.6 per cent, against about 10 per cent last time.

The company said it was pessimistic about prospects

for improved GDP growth in European markets in the second half of 1996. This would lead to weaker growth of high-yielding business class ticket sales.

Costs of fuel and landing and navigation fees were rising, the company said, while payroll costs were projected to grow by between 4 and 5 per cent, well in excess of Finnish inflation.

Mr Potila suggested other European airlines were struggling with similar problems and Finnair's balance sheet was "stronger than perhaps at

any other time". He said: "Magic tricks will not work for anyone... our prospects are at least as good as those of anyone else."

Finnair yesterday reported a rise in pre-tax profits from FM419m to FM533m (£113.4m) in the year to March. The figures, some FM100m below market expectations, were achieved despite a 12 per cent appreciation of the markka.

Turnover rose 7.9 per cent to FM7.3bn, against FM6.7bn, but air transport revenues per revenue tonne kilometre - a key indicator - shrank 2.5 per cent

from the previous year, when they rose 3 per cent. The company said yields were continuing to fall so far this year.

Operating profits in flight operations advanced from FM490m to FM566m on sales up 6.8 per cent at FM6.4bn. Tour operations posted a narrow loss after a FM9.8m profit last time, while operating profits from hotels dipped from FM2.5m to FM1.5m.

Overall operating margins strengthened from 14.2 per cent to 14.7 per cent, but earnings per share slipped from FMS.1 to FMS.6.

## Framatome rules out buying into Valeo

By David Owen in Paris

Framatome, the French nuclear plant group, has ruled out buying a strategic stake in Valeo, the automotive components company.

Mr Jean-Claude Leny, Framatome chairman and managing director, made the disclosure on Friday, while revealing that the state-controlled company was seeking to diversify into a third industrial activity.

This would help offset an expected sales decline in its nuclear activities. It could also facilitate the flotation of part of the group's capital. Mr Leny said such a move would act as a powerful incentive for management and staff.

His remarks came as the group unveiled a net profit for 1995 of FF963m (£127.3m), down 21.6 per cent from FF1.46m reported in 1994 and the fourth consecutive annual decline.

Turnover dropped from FF2.05bn in 1994 to FF1.79bn. This was due to a decline of FF2.4bn to FF1.5bn in the sales generated by the group's nuclear activities.

In 1996, the company expects a further fall in turnover to FF1.5bn, of which FF1.5bn will be generated by its nuclear arm, which is focusing increasingly on providing support services for existing plants. But it anticipates an upturn in profits to about FF500m.

Mr Leny gave no specific indication of which new sector the group wanted to diversify into. But he said it would have three characteristics: it would be a strong technological content, corresponding to Framatome's corporate culture; it would be a significant and growing global market; and it would allow Framatome to become a European or worldwide leader in the sector right away.

Explaining the thinking behind Framatome's desire to branch out, he said most of the big industrial groups whose core activities were in slow-growing, mature markets were conglomerates.

Such companies combined "mature mechanical activities with fast-growing electronic businesses", he said. "Why should that be forbidden to Framatome?"

In addition to its nuclear business, Framatome is Europe's third-largest manufacturer of connectors. This business accounted for a quarter of turnover in 1995, a proportion that is next year set to rise to nearly one-third.

The company emerged last month as a possible buyer of the 37.7 per cent of Valeo owned by Mr Carlo De Benedetti, the Italian industrialist, through Cerus, his French holding company. Cerus confirmed in April it was prepared to sell this stake at the right price.

But Mr Franck Borotra, the French industry minister, said in an interview last week he was "not very favourably disposed" towards Framatome's purchase of these shares.

## NeuroSearch shares soar as trading begins

By Hilary Barnes in Copenhagen

The price of shares in NeuroSearch, the pharmaceuticals venture company, soared 33 per cent to DK227 in a brisk first day of trading in Copenhagen yesterday.

When the company's first public share offering closed on Thursday the issue was oversubscribed 17 times. The price was fixed at DK170 a share, the maximum level quoted when the offer was made. The issue raised about DK221m and placed a value on the company of DK1.1bn (£169m).

NeuroSearch, founded in 1989 by a team of scientists from Ferrosan, which was taken over by Novo Nordisk, the insulin and enzymes manufacturer, in the same year, has specialised in developing compounds for the treatment of disorders of the central nervous system.

A product for treatment of Parkinson's disease, which according to NeuroSearch eliminates the serious side-effects associated with current treatments, is starting clinical trials in co-operation with Bristol Myers.

The company also has products for the treatment of depression, Alzheimer's and the effects of strokes in preparation.

NeuroSearch said it would tap the market for further capital within the next 18 months or so, when it may also seek a listing on Nasdaq or Easdaq.

## Yorkshire Elec quells takeover speculation

By Simon Holbeigh

Yorkshire Electricity, the regional electricity company, yesterday moved to quell speculation that it is seeking to be taken over.

Mr Christopher Hampson, chairman, contacted pensioners' trust suggestion that the board saw a better future for the company as part of a larger group.

"We see a perfectly viable future as an independent rec," he said. "We have demonstrated that. However, he added "if someone comes along with a humongous offer then we'll look at it."

Mr Hampson also confirmed that the company was leaving the telecommunications sector to concentrate on its "core competencies" in electricity and gas. The company was finding opportunities in electricity generation: it already owns 250MW of capacity and will build another 500MW in the coming year. "We think we can do well out of gas", he added.

The company is also examining ways of enhancing shareholder value. Mr Hampson said it could accommodate gearing of 100 per cent against the current 45 per cent, with interest cover at about 4 to 5 times against the current 11 times.

The group achieved a 1 per cent rise in pre-tax profits in the year to March 31 from £217m to £218m, including a £20.1m exceptional gain from the demerger of the National Grid Group, including the exceptional, pre-tax figure fell 6 per cent to £19m.

The results are in line with expectations, he said, but disappointed the market because of confusion over dividend policy. Total dividends paid rose 10 per cent but dividends per share rose only 7.5 per cent to 38.18p allowing for a 5-for-6 consolidation earlier this year. The market had expected 10 per cent growth in dividends per share.

This year Yorkshire is introducing a customer billing system which it hopes will cut costs by up to 25 per cent. The training associated with its introduction will, however, slow the rate of cost reduction.

"It costs us between £26 and £30 per customer a year to deal with customers so a 25 per cent saving is significant," said Mr Hampson.

The shares closed 15p down at 725p.

COMMENT

Multi-utility may be the theme of the moment in the UK utilities sector but Yorkshire's four telecoms may be relevant for others. The management speak aside, sticking to one's knitting has never been a bad business idea. Yorkshire is right to note that telecoms, as an industry driven by technological change, sits uneasily with electricity. That said, Mr Hampson's desire to stay independent will not impress an investor base keen to lighten its exposure to utilities ahead of a possible change in government. Against that, his undertaking to ratchet the gearing towards 100 per cent - probably with a share buy-back - should mollify some. On a prospective yield of 7.5 per cent, a premium of 60 per cent to the market, the stock looks fairly valued.

## Man United directors in £21m share sale

By Patrick Harverson

Four directors of Manchester United have cashed in on the recent surge in the football club's share price by selling more than 4.5m shares for £21m.

Mr Martin Edwards, the club's chairman, and three other directors sold the shares on Thursday, a week after the English Premier League negotiated a new £670m four-year television contract with

BSkyB, the satellite television channel.

United's shares had risen sharply in the days before the BSkyB deal was signed in circulation that the club, as champions of the Premier League and Britain's most popular team, would be among the biggest beneficiaries.

Since January the shares have risen nearly one and a half times.

Yesterday, the shares rose another 6p to 465p, despite the

news that the four directors had sold 7.3 per cent of the equity on the open market. Dealers said that with only a limited number of shares in circulation, the opportunity to buy had been snapped up by institutions.

Mr Edwards and his family sold 3.7m shares at 450p each, raising £16.6m and reducing their stake in the club to 17.3 per cent.

Mr Amer Almidani, a non-executive director, sold 500,000

shares worth £2.25m to cut his stake to 2.13 per cent.

Mr Robin Lauder, finance director, sold 291,000 shares for £1.3m, and Mr Maurice Watkins sold 100,000 shares for £450,000.

The transactions were the second time in less than three months that United directors had sold a large number of shares.

In late March, Mr Edwards, his wife and the family's trust raised £4.4m, while another

£2.25m worth of shares were sold by Mr Almidani and Mr Lauder.

At the time, Mr Edwards promised not to sell any more shares without the consent of Merrill Lynch, the club's broker.

However, the club said yesterday that since then institutions eager to buy the stock had pressured the broker to persuade the United chairman to release some more shares to the market.

## Allied Carpets staff poised for cash pile

By Christopher Brown-Humes

Staff who invested in the 1991 management buy-out of Allied Carpets could see a 60-fold return on their outlay when the group floats this summer.

A total of 180 managers and staff invested between £500 and £500,000 when the buy-out team bought 84 stores from Lowndes Queensway for £9.3m. The group's value on flotation is estimated at about £220m.

At this level, a £500 investment five years ago would be worth £30,000 while the £500,000 invested by Mr Ray Nethercott, managing director, would convert to £3m.

The returns look terrific, but putting money into the buy-out in 1991 was a brave act given depressed consumer spending and the slump in the housing market. The group's parent, Lowndes Queensway, went into receivership in 1990.

The flotation, via a placing and intermediaries offer, is designed to give Allied access to capital markets, a higher profile, and an exit for its two main shareholders - Asda, the supermarket group and CIN-Ven, the venture capital company. It is understood they plan to sell the bulk of their combined 80 per cent holding. Directors and staff have the remaining 20 per cent, but senior managers plan to keep the majority of their shares.

The flotation comes amid clear signs of a pick-up in consumer spending and the housing market - both crucial to the fortunes of the £1.8bn a year carpet maker.

Allied is believed to be planning to raise between £20m and £30m of new money to assist expansion. It wants to open 20 stores a year, building on its 207-strong chain. It has a 12 per cent share of the highly fragmented UK carpet market. Carpetright, run by Lord Harris of Peckham, is currently the UK's only quoted carpet group.

## Exceptional gain from disposal lifts P&amp;S to £18.6m

By John Authers

Portsmouth and Sunderland, the regional newspapers and retailing group, reported a 3 per cent fall in underlying full-year profits to £2m, although the pre-tax figure was buoyed to £18.6m by an exceptional £10m gain from the sale of the Croydon Advertiser group in December.

Managers had predicted that profits would decline after a year of heavy investment, and predicted another slight fall in profits this year.

They said they had laid the basis for sustained earnings growth after that.

Mr Charles Brims, chief executive, said significant depreciation and interest costs would be incurred this year, with increased revenue from the new presses only coming through next year.

He added that the lack of

any national printing contracts, higher newspaper costs and the store opening programme would all cut profitability in the short term.

Total turnover on continuing operations rose by 19 per cent to £133m for the year to March 30.

This reflected a fall of 1 per cent in revenue from newspaper printing after a drop in contract printing.

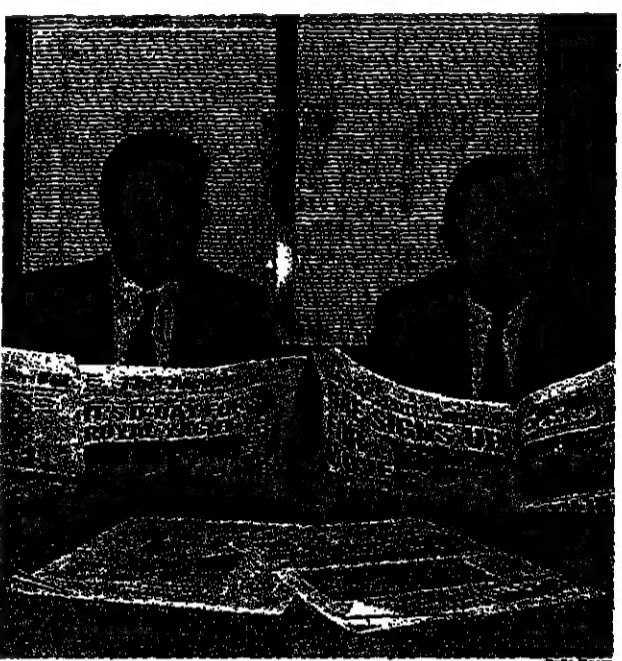
Sales from the group's chain of One Stop convenience stores rose 40 per cent to £78m.

The group opened an extra 22 shops during the year to make a total of 132. It plans to continue opening 30 a year.

The company also invested £11m in new printing presses at Sunderland and Hartlepool last year.

These are scheduled to become fully operational in April next year.

Credit Lyonnais Laing, the house broker, is predicting a



Charles Brims (left) and Sir Richard Storey, chairman, both significant interest and depreciation costs will be incurred

fall in 1996-97 pre-tax profits to about £2.5m, with earnings per share of 44p.

It is projecting profits for 1997-98 of £3.5m.

This gives a forward p/e for this year of 15.7 on yesterday's

close of 60p, down 15p.

Earnings per share, after adjusting for the disposal, fell to 45.7p (48.5p).

An increased final dividend of 9.01p makes a total of 12.87p, an increase of 10 per cent.

## Vardon takes the healthy option

By David Blackwell

Vardon added a fourth leg to its leisure businesses yesterday with the £40.5m acquisition of Dynamic Leisure, a health club operator.

The group will also repay £5.25m of the acquisition's bank borrowings.

The deal will be financed through a placing and 34p-10p offer at 115p to raise £23.4m. The shares were unchanged at 128p.

The acquisition, which trades under the Archer name, is expected to be earnings enhancing next year.

Archer, which has net assets of £2.4m, is expected to report profits before interest and tax of £4.5m this year on sales of £28m.

Mr David Hudd, chairman,

said the group had been determined to add another division next year in order to soak up the cash being thrown off by the bingo, holiday, and attractions divisions. But the opportunity to buy Archer had been too good to miss.

The business would help to balance further the seasonal swings of the holiday business and the attractions, mainly Sea Life Centres. It also had plenty of room for growth - "there is a huge latent demand for decent facilities at a decent price," said Mr Hudd.

The group is issuing 38.8m new ordinary shares to satisfy the consideration, and a further 2.8m shares to raise a further £3.1m, mainly to cover expenses.

Mr Harm Tegelaars, who founded Archer in 1980, will

join Vardon's board to head the health and fitness division. He sold the business to Queens Moat Houses in 1988, and bought it back with the management for £7m in 1993. The management will retain 8.1m shares.

Archer operates nine private health clubs, as well as managing 25 local authority amenities.

Mr Tegelaars said there was considerable scope for growth in local authority business, as only just over 15 per cent was contracted to the private sector.

The placing is underwritten by Morgan Grenfell and SBC Warburg, which is also broker.

COMMENT

Vardon has joined the vogue for health and fitness which

sparked Whitbread to buy David Lloyd Leisure last August and Stakis to acquire LivingWell last month. The scramble has been caused by the realisation that this is about the only leisure activity with such strong growth prospects - the UK has a fitness centre for every 112,000 people, compared with one per 29,000 people in the US. The price of 15 times earnings does not look excessive, and Vardon has the management zip and the cash to drive Archer forward. However, before rushing in, investors should note that the bingo clubs continue to be hit by the National Lottery, with like-for-like sales down 10 per cent in the first half. In addition, the rapidly growing group has yet to report a full year of trading from its holiday division.

## Making stout profits: in black and white

Bloom might splutter into his pint of Guinness if he turned up in Dublin tomorrow for the annual celebration of his urban odyssey in James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

He would find the brewer serving the stout at a chilly 3°C, boosting the "noise level" of marketing, and exporting each day 2m pints plus one pre-fabricated Irish pub to the far corners of the world.

There's no doubting the Irish thirst for beer. They rank only behind Czechs and Germans in world tables, consuming 135 litres per person a year. With 25 per cent of the Irish teetotal, moreover, some are more than pulling their weight.

Guinness stout still accounts for nearly one in every two pints of beer sold in Ireland and it is also the dominant brand for drinkers aged 18 to 35 thanks to heavy advertising since the late 1980s that recruited younger and wealthier drinkers and more women.

But a third of young men and half of young women have never tried it. Competition for them is intensifying from lighter drinks such as Budweiser lager and alcoholic lemonades.

To attract converts, Guinness is experimenting in 90 Dublin pubs with serving its stout at 3°C, making it by far

## Roderick Oram explains why Guinness believes cold porter is hot

the coldest beer on the bar. Bloom drank his Guinness at room temperature but the beer has gradually chilled out to 12°C-13°C in the 1970s, then to 9°C-10°C in the 1980s and 8°C-9°C in the early 1990s.

Drinking Guinness at 3°C, however, turns into a surprisingly active recreation. With the glass almost too cold to hold, the technique involves frequent testing of pints on the bar and warming of hands in pockets.

To capture youthful eyes and ears, Guinness is launching an advertising blitz on Monday aimed for the first time at people in their early 20s. By next year, the annual spend on the brand will have quadrupled since 1990 making it by far the most persistent voice across all media from television and radio to newspapers, billboards and sporting and artistic events.

Mr John Kennedy, an Irish American who runs all Guinness's brands in Ireland, is



Chilling out: Guinness has become cool and is now served at 3°C

ness's brands in Ireland, is mum about the style of the new campaign but promises it is targeted at a radically different person than the "comely maidens dancing at the crossroads," to draw on the immortal words of one of the nation's founding fathers.

Yet, it is just such an evocation of the past that Guinness is trading on with its Irish theme pubs. Teams of designers hunched over their computers are churning out pubs in five styles - three genuine:

"country cottage", "traditional shop", and "Dublin Victorian" - and two invented: "brewery" and "Gaelic".

Guinness does not own the pubs but instead offers free to entrepreneurs its design, sourcing and marketing skills that run to Irish menus offering the likes of Molly Malone Fish Soup, supply of real Irish bar tenders and musicians and "twinning" with Irish pubs. For some £150,000 to £200,000 a bar owner abroad can buy an Irish pub, tailored to his prem-

ises and neatly shipped to him as a flat pack in a couple of containers. The most expensive one yet has just opened in Atlanta at a cost of £1.5m (£280,000).

The Guinness Irish Pub Concept company, launched in 1992, is helping local investors open pubs at a rate of one a day around the world. The 1,000th pub is up on the computer screens and will open in late summer. Guinness makes its money selling the pubs Guinness stout, Kilkenny ale and Harp lager and the rapid growth of the pubs was one reason why its beer exports from Ireland have risen 18 per cent so far this year.

If tomorrow Bloom could not endure the cold stout, the clamorous advertising and the redevelopment of Dublin's Custom House area into an off-shore financial centre enticed by generous tax breaks, he might forsake Dublin for one of the nostalgic flat-pack pubs abroad.

How about the nice little one in Odense, Denmark, with a bar a mere 26m long. You can't miss it, Bloom. It's down in the town centre with two bronze children frolicking in a fountain in front. If you lose your way, just ask - it's called Paddy Go Easy.

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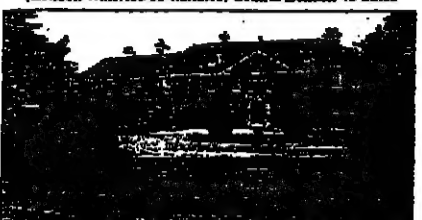
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## COMMENT &amp; ANALYSIS

## FINANCIAL TIMES

Number One Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HL  
Tel: +44 171-873 3000 Telex: 922186 Fax: +44 171-407 5700  
Saturday June 15 1996

## Russian roulette

Russia is the Wild East. Neither its fledgling market economy, nor its faltering democratic system, can be said to obey a set of recognisable laws. Four and a half years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, it is a rash person who would forecast the outcome of tomorrow's presidential election, let alone whether there will be a second round next month.

This is an election which almost certainly matters more to the rest of the world than the US presidential election in November. The differences between Messrs Clinton and Dole are merely a question of degree. Both accept the system in which they operate. There is no such certainty about the different candidates for power in Russia. Few of them can be said to understand what democracy means, let alone to embrace it with enthusiasm. Even fewer really know what a market economy is all about. The system is therefore at stake, not merely who steers it.

Perhaps that may sound too apocalyptic. The likelihood is that the first round of the election will produce a run-off between the front-runners, President Boris Yeltsin and his arch-rival, Mr Gennady Zyuganov, leader of the Communist party. Six months ago, Mr Yeltsin's chances looked somewhere between slim and hopeless. Today, the opinion polls suggest that he enjoys a lead of between 5 and 15 percentage points. In the past five weeks the Moscow stock market index has doubled as investors have registered their relief.

Yet those Russian polls are notoriously unreliable. In a country long ruled by the fearsome KGB, few will give an honest answer to a stranger on the doorstep. Moreover, one trend has been common to almost all the elections held in the former Soviet empire (including eastern Europe) since its collapse: a revolt against the first reformers. Those factors could count in Mr Zyuganov's favour.

## Rapid flight

Would a victory for the Communist leader be the disaster the markets seek to believe? And would a triumph for Mr Yeltsin be such a relief? On the economic front, either victor will have urgent budgetary housekeeping to attend to: not least, dwindling federal tax revenues and hefty debt interest payments inherited from the run-up to the election.

No-one knows quite how Mr Zyuganov would respond to these challenges during his first few weeks in office. But the market reaction to a Communist victory is easy to predict: a collapse

in bond and equity prices and, perhaps most important, a rapid flight out of rubles by foreign and domestic investors alike.

As far as it is possible to judge, Mr Zyuganov's instinct in the face of a rapid ruble decline and corresponding lurch upward in inflation would be to try to re-impose some form of price controls. After several years of free prices, such policies stand very little chance of being effective. But it might be a while before he admitted defeat: by which time the IMF would have ended its support and the government's credibility with international markets would be in shreds.

## Picking quarrels

The political reaction of an internationally isolated Communist leader could be very dangerous. One temptation would be to raise the nationalist banner, possibly by picking quarrels with one or more of the former Soviet republics, like the Baltic states, or Ukraine. Such gestures, in the middle of a US presidential campaign, would invite rapid retaliation, and a return to cold war confrontation.

If a vote for Mr Zyuganov is a vote for the past, those who are thinking of the future of Russia can turn to Grigory Yavlinsky, the candidate closest to being a genuine reformer. If he comes a strong third in the ballot - the best he can probably hope for - his vote would send a signal that there is a significant constituency for sustained reform.

The question-mark over Mr Yeltsin is precisely how firmly he is committed to that aim. If elected, he would enjoy a honeymoon in markets which would make it much easier to keep the economy on course. The worry is whether he will keep all, or any, of his microeconomic promises: such as increased foreign openness, an overhaul of the tax system, and beefed-up competition policy.

Mr Yeltsin has clawed his way back to popularity by blatantly using the powers of his office. He has beaten an increasingly nationalistic drum, and exploited his own domination of the security services and the media. The financial and industrial interests that have rallied behind him over the past six months will want some kind of payoff. That augurs ill for further liberalisation of the economy, or the political system.

A victory for Mr Zyuganov would at best be very bad, at worst, disastrous. A victory for Mr Yeltsin would mean more mud-died, half-hearted reform. In today's Wild East, that is the best that can be hoped for.

## The tale of Mr Five Per Cent

Kenneth Gooding on the events that led the most powerful trader in the world's copper markets to run up big losses for Sumitomo

Copper is the world's most heavily traded metal and one of the most useful. Switch on a light and it works because copper wiring is carrying the current. Turn on a tap and there is a good chance the water will flow through copper pipes.

So the price of copper - set globally by traders at the London Metal Exchange - really matters. Yet the copper market has been in turmoil for the past month as prices have plummeted.

Traders thought they had seen the worst of it on June 6 when the prices quoted on the exchange fell by 15 per cent in just two hours of pandemonium. The scale and the speed of the drop was unprecedented.

Our copper dealer was having to quote a price every second," said one dealer. "I thought he was going to have a heart attack."

By the end of that trading session, copper's price had dropped by 25 per cent in just six trading days. The market was full of rumours about the financial disaster this might cause among traders. "There are bound to be casualties in a market like that," a trader pointed out.

Traders suggested the turmoil was being caused by a huge battle between Sumitomo, the big Japanese trading house, and two big US hedge funds - Mr George Soros's Quantum fund and Mr Julian Robertson's Tiger fund. The latter were believed to be intent on driving down the copper price, while Sumitomo was determined they would not succeed.

Only a very few people - sworn to secrecy - knew that Sumitomo's copper trading department was also in a state of turmoil. But traders love to gossip and a rumour circulated that Sumitomo had shifted Mr Yasuo Hamanaka, seen as the most powerful trader in the global copper business, to a new job. It was this that started the price slide at the end of May.

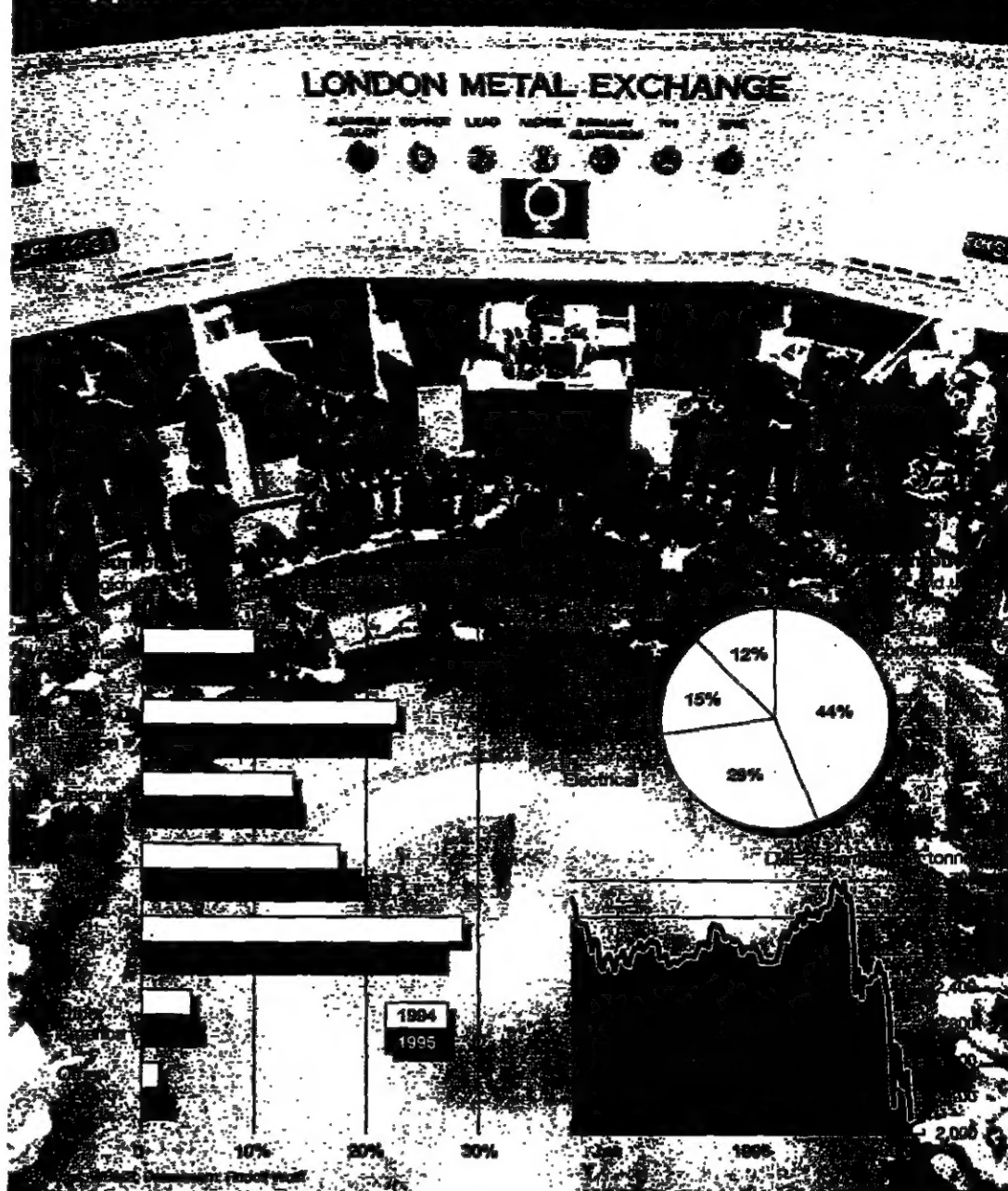
Sumitomo confirmed he had indeed been moved, but said he was to take on a wider role in the metals trading department. Most traders assumed he had been pushed sideways because Sumitomo had become fed up with being blamed for gyrations in the copper market.

What emerged yesterday was that Mr Hamanaka was helping regulators with their inquiries. Sumitomo announced that Mr Hamanaka had lost \$1.8bn over 10 years by "unauthorised trading" - a revelation which sent the international copper community into deep shock.

To that community Mr Hamanaka was a living legend - a man who rarely wound up on the wrong end of a deal and had consistently made large profits for Sumitomo. In Japan he was known as "Mr Five Per Cent" because Sumitomo was believed to account for that much of global copper trading.

His influence on the London Metals Exchange was far greater. Mr Charlie Vincent, co-owner with Mr Ashley Levett of Winchester Commodity Group, a broker Sumitomo used for some of its copper dealings

## Copper: a market in turmoil



in London, claimed recently that their group accounted for 14 per cent of the exchange's copper market turnover.

Mr Hamanaka's powerful position flowed from the fact that Sumitomo is one of the world's leading traders of physical copper, handling up to 750,000 tonnes for clients, mainly in Asia, but increasingly in Europe. That was roughly 7 per cent of the 10.4m tonnes used in the world outside the former eastern bloc countries and China last year.

Unlike most Japanese trading houses, Sumitomo hedged its copper dealings by trading futures and options as well as buying copper for immediate delivery. In this way, it has been exerting a tremendous influence on the market.

Mr Hamanaka's powerful position in the copper business became particularly apparent in 1993 when copper for immediate delivery seemed to be virtually unavailable - forcing

traders to pay a premium. Traders on the London Metals Exchange complained that while there appeared to be plenty of copper stocks in LME authorised warehouses, Sumitomo controlled most of it and would not let it go.

Mr Hamanaka admitted that Sumitomo did control a lot of the stock but needed it to guarantee a smooth supply of metal to its customers. The group offered a type of "just-in-time" system designed to minimise customers' stocks and risks, regardless of price or supply disruptions. His group had been buying copper because it had received some large orders from big customers.

Nevertheless, after the 1993 squeeze, Crédit Lyonnais Rouse, part of the French banking group, which acted as LME clearing broker for Sumitomo among other clients, apologised for its part in the squeeze. It paid \$100,000 towards

exchange costs, which traders saw as a fine for irresponsibility.

But still the squeezes continued and so did the complaints. Last November the LME started an inquiry that ultimately led to Mr Hamanaka's downfall.

The LME's concern was to preserve orderly markets. It is a unique exchange, the world's leading futures market for trading in lead, zinc, primary aluminium, aluminium alloy, nickel and tin as well as copper. Most world metal industry supply contracts are based on its official prices.

As recently as 1995, however, it was being written off after its members collectively lost \$800m in a collapse of the tin market. Recovery has been remarkable. In the past six years turnover has risen by 700 per cent and last year was equivalent to 1bn tonnes of metal worth \$2,500bn. Mr Raj Bagri, the chairman, suggests this is because the exchange

has attempted to provide the metal industries with the services they need. One of these is to provide a market where users can find the physical metal they need and where producers can offload excess metal. But Mr Bagri is acutely aware that orderly trading will not always be easy to maintain with the increasing mobility of international capital and the massive increase in futures buying. "This makes it comparatively easy or tempting for one or more participants, individually or acting in concert, to create in any free market like ours such dominant positions so as to result in potentially undesirable situations or practices."

The exchange will not say what it discovered in the November inquiry but information was passed to the Securities and Futures Association, one of its regulators. It called in the UK Treasury and contacts were made with Japanese officials. They then contacted Sumitomo which immediately started the internal inquiry which led to Mr Hamanaka's dismissal and disclosure of the huge losses.

What now happens in the market depends on whether the copper price stabilises or drops dramatically. A sharp fall could cause financial casualties among members of the London Metals Exchange and elsewhere in the copper industry.

More important, a further fall would hit copper producers, forcing them to shut mines. If extensive, this would seriously damage the economies of copper-producing countries such as Chile and Peru. Sumitomo helped stabilise the situation yesterday by insisting it would carry on trading copper as usual. And the London Metals Exchange survived its first trading day after the news without the meltdown that some expected. "The market has proved it can take this kind of thing on the chin," Mr Bagri said last night.

Nevertheless, the exchange is bound to be subject to criticism. It is not the first time a rogue copper trader has run up big losses. In 1993 a trader at Codelco, the Chilean group which is the world's biggest producer, lost more than \$170m as the price plunged. Mr Bagri says the exchange is always looking at procedures to prevent market manipulation but it cannot be held responsible for poor trading or lack of control at client companies.

The exchange is preparing itself for further action over the losses. In the Codelco case, company managers lost their jobs for failing to supervise the trader, and some civil suits were launched for the return of "excessive commissions" and other allegedly improper payments.

"This is not the end of the [Hamanaka] story," says Mr Bagri. "If you claim to lose \$1.8bn it seems unbelievable that one man alone could be responsible. Quite clearly the authorities here and abroad will be wanting to know just how it happened. I certainly want to know."

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Number One Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HL

We are keen to encourage letters from readers around the world. Letters may be faxed to +44 171-873 5936 (please set fax to "fine"). e-mail: letters.editor@ft.com Translation may be available for letters written in the main international languages.

## UN leader should be chosen on merit not by political horse-trading

From Dame Margaret Anstee.  
Sir, May I most heartily endorse the wise proposal in your leader of June 6 ("Choosing a UN leader") for a more objective and rational process of selection for the post of secretary-general of the United Nations, based on carefully comparing merits of a number of qualified candidates? It would be an enormous improvement on the political horse-trading which has decided the appointment during the first half century of the organisation's existence.

More importantly, it would mark a key step towards the major reform of the UN, particularly if the same procedure were extended to the top posts of all UN organisations and agencies. As a veteran of many attempts at UN reform - both as architect and implementer - I have lost my faith in logical, across-the-board reform. The conflicting interests of member states mean that logical plans that require the meticulous interlocking of related actions on many fronts are doomed to dilution and failure. The only real possibility for

successful reform lies in adopting a few key measures that would have a multiplier effect. A proper "headhunt" for the post of secretary-general and those of other leaders in the UN system would certainly do this and be more effective than any formal reorganisation. At the same time, tenure should be limited to a single period, though that might be longer than at present - only one bite at the cherry, but a larger cherry. This would do much to lessen the impact of political pressures on internal management and personnel policy.

Finally, a consolidated budget for the whole system would do more to achieve true co-ordination, avoid duplication and cost far less than the present tangle of co-ordinating mechanisms and units, often leading to the absurd phenomenon of "co-ordinators of co-ordinators".

Margaret Anstee,  
(former UN under  
secretary-general),  
The Walled Garden,  
Knill,  
Nr Prestigne, Powys, UK

## Decline part of UK's psyche

From Mr Fred Tuckman.  
Sir, Re Martin Wolf's article "End of relative decline" (Britain survey, June 14), it is unlikely that the relative decline has stopped. It rests deep in the UK's national psyche. Go back to one of the Hawthorne Experiments at Western Electric in the early 1930s. It was discovered that all groups adopt "pace" which is comfortable and justifiable to its members. I believe similar factors play a part in national actions but unacknowledged. All we hear and see of industrial activity on the continent suggests they operate with greater intensity than we do. They may work shorter hours, but while at it they are more focused, more intense. In their striving for

quality they are less easily satisfied. In the fight for markets more ruthlessly determined. Mates at the work-bench will criticise one another freely, which here we only do with extreme reluctance.

All of this makes the UK a more tolerant and pleasant place to live in. People from abroad like being here, but our relative standard of living slips. Can we do anything about this? Do we want to? Is it worth the price?

Fred Tuckman,  
European management consultant  
and adviser on public affairs,  
6 Cumberland Road,  
Barnes,  
London SW13 9LX, UK

## Winning the greatest respect

From Mr Edward Hadas.  
Sir, In your leader "All bull" (June 10), you imply that the Pope's pronouncements on matters of faith and doctrine are treated with unquestioning respect. The Fed may or may not move markets, but the Pope's influence on morals and belief, even among Catholics, seems fairly modest. The Pope brings in bigger crowds (it will be a while before a million fans greet Fed

chairman, Mr Alan Greenspan, in the Philippines), but those of us who feel more strongly about religion than finance can only wish that the average encyclical received a quarter of the respect given to the slightest Greenspan twitch.

Edward Hadas,  
NatWest Markets,  
135 Bishopsgate,  
London EC2M 3XT, UK

## Government education and research funding factors in US job creation

From M.H. Barnes.  
Sir, In emphasising as much as she does the vital contribution of the private sector in the creation of high-tech jobs in the US ("The seedbed of job creation", June 10), Linda Bilmes does not give credit to what I believe is the second essential factor in this job creation, and that is the role of the federal

and state governments in long-term funding of educational and research establishments.

The impact on the genesis and development of the biotechnology industry in California of the funding of biomedical research by the national institutes of health over many decades and the excellent research training given by

the various campuses of the University of California system was enormous.

In a very real sense, the availability on the campuses of leading biomedical academics who turned entrepreneur was the immediate cause of the biotechnology revolution.

The third crucial factor in the

development of the biotechnology industry in the US was the availability of venture capital, but that's another story!

M.H. Barnes,  
3 Broom Grove,  
Walsford,  
Herts WD1 3RY,  
UK

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Man in the News • Gavin Casey

## New chief sent to the Tower

George Graham on the mystery man in charge at the London Stock Exchange

The last two chief executives of the London Stock Exchange left in a hurry. Mr Peter Rawlinson jumped in 1993 after the fiasco over the introduction of a new electronic settlement system. Mr Michael Lawrence was pushed in January this year after a series of rows with his biggest members centering on plans for a radically new system of share trading.

It has taken five months, but the exchange this week came up with a candidate for a position widely considered among the most thankless in the City of London: Mr Gavin Casey will take up residence in the stock exchange tower in August.

Mr Casey's name had featured on few outside shortlists for the job, despite a long career in the City.

"Gavin who?" was the question of one senior equity dealer when asked for his comments on the appointment.

Now 49, Mr Casey comes from Merrill Lynch, one of the world's largest stockbrokers and, since its acquisition last year of the London house of Smith New Court, one of London's biggest.

He trained as an accountant and in 1972 joined County Bank, the merchant banking affiliate of National Westminster Bank, where he worked in fields such as corporate

finance, banking and venture capital. County went through a series of name changes and restructurings and Mr Casey became deputy chief executive of County NatWest - the core of what is today NatWest Markets.

In 1987, however, County NatWest came to grief over the Blue Arrow scandal, in which the markets were allegedly misled about the results of a 287m rights issue, then the City's largest.

Mr Casey was not criticised by Department of Trade and Industry inspectors appointed to investigate the affair. Nor was he a target of the - ultimately unsuccessful - prosecutions that followed.

Mr John Kemp-Welch, the stock exchange chairman, says he is satisfied that Mr Casey had played no more than a peripheral role in the Blue Arrow affair. He adds that the appointment was checked with regulators such as the Bank of England, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Securities

and Investments Board. In 1989, Mr Casey moved to Smith New Court, the independent broker and marketmaker, as finance director. He became its chief operating officer in 1994, the post he held when the firm was acquired by Merrill Lynch. Since then Mr Casey has held the title of chief administrative officer for international equities, working largely on the integration of the two businesses, a task that is now almost completed.

Mr Michael Marks, co-head of global equities at Merrill Lynch and Mr Casey's boss for the past seven years, says he is an excellent choice for the exchange. "The advantage he brings is that he understands the securities business - all those things that make the joint tick," he says.

When Mr Lawrence was dismissed in January, Mr Kemp-Welch said the next chief executive must have "a winning way with people and a tremendous sense of humour". Some colleagues say Mr Casey has these two attributes, and stock

exchange staff loyally insist he has already cracked one or two jokes. Others who have worked with him do not remember this facet of his character. Former colleagues recall a precise and meticulous manager with a good understanding of the industry and a penchant for keeping documentation on everything he is involved in.

Nevertheless, Mr Casey has received a relatively warm welcome. Three factors weigh in his favour.

The first is his reputation as a ferocious cost-cutter at Smith New Court, where he installed efficient management information systems and maintained tight personal control over even relatively small expenditure. That is a valuable attribute for the stock exchange, which needs to reduce its overheads. Over the next 18 months it will lose one third of its income with the disappearance of settlement fees from its Tallman system, which will be replaced by the Crest system

run by a City consortium. "People who know him better than I do tell me that he's a cost-cutter, and that is exactly what we need," says the head of securities at one large City broker.

Mr Casey's second advantage is that he comes from one of the large marketmakers. They control trading in London equities, quoting on screen prices at which they are willing to buy or sell shares to institutional investors or to secondary brokers acting for smaller investors.

The marketmakers have been the focus of opposition to plans to move to an electronic order-driven system of trading, in which buy and sell orders from investors would be automatically matched by computer. And Merrill Lynch's Mr Marks, Mr Casey's present boss, was even more vociferously opposed to the change than most.

Stock exchange supporters argue that Mr Casey is exactly the right man for this reform.

As one leading City figure put it, it took the hawkish former president Richard Nixon to persuade the US establishment to open relations with China, and it may take a former marketmaker to carry the day for order-driven trading.

Although the final details have not yet been fixed, the exchange's blueprint for order-driven trading has already evolved in a way that largely preserves the marketmakers' privileges and market position. Mr Casey may have little difficulty in carrying his former colleagues.

Mr Casey's third advantage is that he will start his new job when most of the soul-searching about the exchange's future is already over. He is expected to take up his post in August, by which time the exchange will already have agreed not only the blueprint for the electronic order book, but also a far-reaching budget strategy which is to be put to the board at the end of this month.

Mr Casey's task, then, will be to administer a strategy which he had little part in formulating - a role he appears comfortable with.

"I am in favour of doing what the membership wants," he says. "The job of a chief executive should be to agree a plan with the board, and then get on with it."



## Young markets sign up successful squads

Richard Gourlay and Christopher Price on the rise of Aim and its counterparts in Europe

Mr Avner Pdahtur and Mr Paul Mendelsohn last month raised \$225,000 by selling shares in their chain of six dental surgeries. Had they tried a year earlier, their attempts to extract capital from a public stock market would have been as painful as having teeth pulled. But the Alternative Investment Market, which celebrates its first birthday next week, has given their company, Whitcross Dental Care, capital for expansion.

"The profile that a public listing has given us is disproportionate to our size in the industry," says Mr Pdahtur. "From our very short experience we are happy with the Aim listing," says the professional manager, who joined Whitcross after running a company in Israel and taking an MBA.

Whitcross is one of 164 companies quoted on Aim which together have a market capitalisation of more than £4.3bn (\$6.6bn). The market, catering for the needs of small companies, has exceeded expectations as a replacement for the Unlisted Securities Market which the London Stock Exchange is to close at the end of this year.

Aim - along with the new growth company stock markets that are springing up in continental Europe - is beginning to channel investment capital to young companies at a much earlier stage in their development than has been possible since the heyday of the USM in the mid 1980s.

Stockbrokers, venture capitalists and investment bankers are optimistic that Europe may finally be providing growing companies with the access to capital their counterparts in the US have enjoyed for a decade through the successful Nasdaq market.

The Bourse de France decided last year to set up the Nouveau Marché for companies with high growth potential but with an inadequate record for the main market.

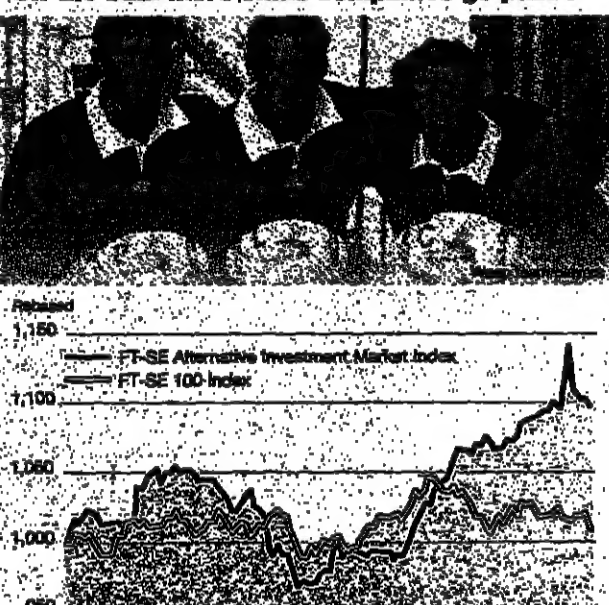
Launched in February, the market has had a slow start and has attracted only seven companies to date. But French investors are showing interest. Last week, a FF448m (\$66.2m) offering of shares in Geneset, a French biotechnology company, on Nasdaq and the Nouveau Marché was oversubscribed more than 100 times.

The Nouveau Marché model is to be extended across Europe next year through EuroNM, a Brussels-based organisation set up two months ago. It hopes to bring in small company houses in Belgium and Germany. Confusingly, this model is similar to the screen-based Easdaq market, planned as Europe's equivalent to Nasdaq. It has been planned for more than a year and is due to be launched in September.

Backed by a private consortium of US and European investment bankers, stockbrokers and venture capitalists, Easdaq is now actively seeking companies and testing its trading and settlement systems.

Mr Andrew Beeson, chief executive of stockbrokers Beeson Gregory who is active both in the development of Easdaq and in Aim, says there is no conflict between

On the batt: more small companies go public



the different markets. "A bit of competition is never a bad thing for expanding the marketplace," he says.

Easdaq and the EuroNM initiative are trying to attract companies with high growth potential, whereas the Aim has a broader purpose. It has raised \$247m of new capital, but nearly half its companies have listed in order to provide existing shareholders with a market for their shares rather than to raise cash for growth.

For the London Stock Exchange, which has been much criticised in recent years, Aim is welcome success. Launched amid dire warnings of an early demise and with only 10 companies, Aim has been helped by the robust performance of small UK companies. Hundreds of professional and institutional investors regularly deal in the market. More than 3.5bn shares of its 164 companies will have been traded in the first year.

Market practitioners and the City Group for Smaller Companies (Cisec), a pressure group, are particularly impressed by the Stock Exchange's response to criticism of its early plans for replacing the USM.

Aim was initially devised by the exchange as a junior market with less stringent listing regulations for members than the main market. This was immediately rejected by the very investors needed to provide the liquidity - the institutions. They wanted reporting standards closer to those of the main market.

As a result, the Aim authorities rejigged the proposed rules, relaxing some and making others tighter. They dropped the requirement that a company needed to have traded for three years, as was the case for entrants to the USM. And they decided that new issues on the main stock market did not need a sponsor, a role normally undertaken by a stockbroker or bank to verify a company's accounts and financial health. Instead the exchange introduced the concept of nominated advisers. These stockbrokers, corporate finance boutiques, law and accounting firms undertake to make sure their client companies follow Aim rules.

The exchange also generated an immediate supply of companies for Aim by abolishing the facility which allowed direct trading between buyers and sellers in "matched bargain" share trading under the so-called Rule 4.3. The 300 companies using this facility had little choice but to go on to Aim if they were to continue to give their shareholders the opportunity to trade. About 90 companies joined Aim within weeks of 4.3's demise in September. Among their number were stable, mature companies with sound trading records, such as Dawson newspaper distributors, which boosted investor confidence.

The market has attracted new companies, too, such as Whitcross in the dental sector and Pet City, the petcare company. "Concept stocks, such as new ideas in retailing, have attracted a following," says Mr Stephen Goschall, director of English Trust, a corporate finance consultancy. "Few small clubs have also been a favourite. Among those listed or about to list are Chelsea Village, Sunderland, and Preston North End, as well as the Wasps rugby club. The latest to join this week were a jewelry designer, a data network group and a brochure publisher."

While the exchange and the market practitioners can take credit for the new market's sound start, Aim has also had its share of luck. Smaller companies have been in favour with investors for much of Aim's life because of the growing domestic economy. Nor has Aim suffered any corporate collapse, an event which could be more easily overcome now that it is bigger and more liquid.

This luck may not last. Aim has yet to face the real challenge of trying to maintain the interest of investors during an economic downturn when small companies are out of favour. All but the greenest investors remember that it was the poor performance of big company share prices and the wider economy in the late 1990s that led to a loss of interest in the USM - a market which earlier in the decade had a debut as auspicious as the one now enjoyed by Aim.

Sicily goes to the polls after a sorry era of misgovernment, says Robert Graham

## An island engulfed by troubled waters

The dome of the cathedral at Noto, one of the jewels of Sicilian architecture, looks as though it has been hit by a bomb. A huge chunk of the soft yellow sandstone embellished with the most perfect baroque decoration has fallen in, leaving the rest exposed to the elements.

After an earthquake in 1990, substantial funds were set aside to repair dangerous cracks in many of the town's buildings, including the 17th century cathedral. But nothing was done and the dome collapsed in March.

Like many such incidents it provoked neither outrage nor surprise in Sicily - it was seen as simply another disaster waiting to happen. The plight of Noto is just one in a long list of administrative failures blamed on the departing regional government of Sicily as the island's 4.4m voters go to the polls tomorrow to elect a new parliament.

"The outgoing parliament will be remembered as one of the most incompetent and corrupt Sicily has had," observes Mr Paolo Angillet, regional councillor of the Party of the Democratic Left, the dominant partner in the newly formed Rome government.

Since the outgoing parliament convened in 1991, 52 of the 90 deputies have been investigated for charges ranging from corruption to being linked to the mafia. Twenty-five of these were arrested and formally charged.

Last year Sicilicassa, the island's savings bank controlled by the regional government, recorded a staggering £1.137bn (\$800m) loss and more than half its loan portfolio is classified as at risk. The bank has been placed under special administration with its former board under investigation on various counts of fraud and corruption.

Such a sorry record might have gone unnoticed had Sicily not been the poorest of the national debtors. The misgovernment of Sicily has become

an issue because it fuels the demands of the populist Northern League for northern Italy to break away.

The league's increasingly strident appeals for secession may be in practice no more than a form of blackmail to achieve a federal structure for the Italian state with greater powers devolved to the regions. But the league's electoral success reflects exasperation over the vast sums of money (much of it collected in taxes from the north) poured into southern Italy throughout the post-war era to little avail.

Sicily is one of the most dramatic examples of such waste - not least because the island managed to acquire a special autonomy under the 1948 constitution. This left the local administration virtually unaccountable to central government.

As a result the island has more than its fair share of useless public works projects built by mafia-controlled contractors which ruthlessly overcharged the administration. Unfinished motorway viaducts hang empty in the countryside and new hospitals remain closed while magnificent ancient cities - Palermo in the forefront - have been covered by speculators' concrete.

"The regional government has an annual budget of over £25,000m which is more than Italy's defence budget," says Mr Antonio Martino, the former foreign minister whose family comes from Messina. "The region spends more per capita on health than Switzerland."

Central government transfers were meant to close the economic gap between Italy's north and south. But Sicily's per capita income is only 54 per cent of the average in the



Still incomplete: the Messina to Catania motorway

north, productivity is 17 per cent lower and unemployment, at 24 per cent, is four times higher.

Private sector investors steer clear of Sicily in spite of the lower wage costs. Mr Francesco Averna, head of his family drinks and confectionery business and the best-known Sicilian entrepreneur, says this is because businessmen are afraid of tangling with the local bureaucracy and organised crime. Despite the significant steps made by the state over the past three years to break the hold of Cosa Nostra, the umbrella organisation of the Sicilian mafia, most businesses are obliged to pay the "pizzo" (protection money).

But the region and its government share much of the

blame for the absence of investment. Large amounts of public money for developing the economy, including EU funds, are not spent. The Palermo opera house has been under repair for over two decades and the motorway between Messina and Palermo - the link with mainland Italy - remains incomplete.

The administration's budget is eaten up supporting an army of 20,000 employees which help family and friends to the pot of patronage. "People will dream up any excuse to be on the public payroll, even those who are temporarily hired to scrutinise ballot papers at elections," says Mr Angillet of the Party of the Democratic Left.

The regional government is

run on lines that would have been familiar in the days when Sicily was ruled by a Bourbon monarch. The more important the official, the bigger the waiting room and the larger the number of supplicants. The manners, the deference to rank, the timelessness of waiting for appointments are only nudged into the modern era by the sight of an occasional computer and the ring of cellular phones.

The election campaign has seen many wild promises of turning Sicily into a Mediterranean California, creating a series of free-trade zones to relaunch the economy and exploiting the island's year-round tourist potential.

But in private few participants in tomorrow's poll believe much will change in the short term. Alone in Italy, Sicily has stuck to the system of proportional representation which encourages small parties rather than broad coalitions. An enormous field of 1,436 candidates is contesting 90 seats under 147 different flags. Many of these are dubbed "do-it-yourself" candidates, putting together the 140m needed to run a campaign in the hope of winning a 1,700m-a-year job for five years with opportunities to dispense patronage and a healthy pension to follow.

This is not a recipe for stable government, and the main parties on the right and left appear anxious to strike a post-electoral deal that would create a strong administration. Much will depend on the strength of vote for the 51 movements advocating greater autonomy for the island. Not Sicilians (We Sicilians), the largest, is headed by Ms Teresa Canepa, whose father commanded the army of the Sicilian independence movement and was killed in a skirmish with carabinieri.

Ironically 50 years later, it is the north playing the separatist tune, and Sicily and the south more than ever need the linkage with the central government.

## The smack of a firm Labour government

Some fear the worthy policy aims of the party cannot be reconciled, says John Kampfner

Curfews for young children, clampdowns on aggressive beggars, noisy neighbours and fraudulent benefit claimants. Education for parents in disciplining their offspring. Would the Labour party in government be more prescriptive and more moralising than the Conservatives have ever dared to be? Will individual freedom be sacrificed on the altar of a more responsible, cohesive society?

There has been no shortage of proposals from Labour for tackling crime and the collapse of "communities". Each idea has had the personal imprimatur of Mr Tony Blair, the party leader, whose vision of society is influenced by early 20th-century Christian socialists.

"We owe obligations to others as well as to ourselves," says Mr Blair. "The changes in the Labour party have been designed to get it back to its traditional moral roots."

Mr Blair's belief in social responsibility is shared by shadow cabinet members such as Mr Jack Straw, shadow home secretary, and Mr David Blunkett, education spokesman. These three figures have been the driving force behind Labour's reversion to a more socially conservative approach to schooling, family life and the individual's relationship to the community.

Mr Blunkett argues that libertarians on the extreme left and right have lost touch with the concerns of voters. "For communities to work, and for the disadvantaged to succeed, there must be a sense of order," he says. He staunchly defends Mr Straw's suggestion that local authorities should consider introducing a nighttime curfew for children under 10, provided parents and the police approve. Mr Blunkett says those who denounce the plan belonged exclusively to the "woolly-minded chattering classes".

With such disciplinary views, Labour has stolen a march on the government in law-and-order territory that was once the preserve of the Tories. Voters now believe Mr Blair's party is the more determined to tackle crime.

But many Labour supporters suspect that Mr Blair and his colleagues might not know where to draw the line. They fear that Labour has leached itself into a pointless contest in which it will repeatedly try to outdo the Conservatives in populist authoritarianism. Where would it lead? Labour has long opposed capital punishment, but opinion polls consistently show that most Britons are in favour.



One of those who has privately expressed reservations about Labour's authoritarian tendencies is Mr Chris Smith, shadow social security secretary. He has pledged to go further than the Tories in tackling illegal benefit claims. But he sees no conflict between enforcing the law and fostering a tolerant and individualist society. "This is not government wading in with a big stick. There's no difficulty separating broader social and

environmental issues in which stiff regulation is needed - such as pollution, noise and crime - from personal morality," he says.

Even those wary of Labour's new authoritarian streak acknowledge that there has been a change in society's attitude to the relationship between individual and state.

The 1960s and 1970s were halcyon days for liberals in the Labour party: the then home secretary, Mr Roy Jenkins, carried through a series of radical reforms, outlawing discrimination against women and ethnic minorities and easing laws on homosexuality, abortion and divorce. But the present, according to Ms Anna Coote, deputy director of the left-leaning Institute for Public Policy Research, is a time for retrenchment. "We as a nation are no more at ease with liberalism."

Mr Straw is not so sure. He argues that Labour's thinking is just as enlightened now as it was in Mr Jenkins' day. Many argued then that race relations legislation infringed personal liberty. Just as Mr Straw is criticised now for wanting to enforce parental responsibility by law. Nor are all his

views anti-liberal. He supports the lowering of the age of consent for homosexuals to 16 from 18 and believes they should be treated as equals in the armed forces.

Mr Blair and his allies insist that under their leadership a Labour government would embrace both individual freedoms and a sense of community. Many in the party, however, doubt that these two worthy aims can be reconciled.

One Labour backbencher who takes a relaxed view is Mr Ken Livingstone. Under his leadership in the 1980s, the Greater London Council turned itself into a headquarters for leftwing libertarians. Now MP for Brent East, Mr Livingstone sees the Blair-Straw-Blunkett agenda as the return of the traditionalists in their cyclical battle with the individualists.

He recalls that when he joined his local Labour party in 1969 - at the peak of "flower power" and "free love" - many of his new colleagues were shocked when he told them he was living with a woman. "But they've changed now, and I believe some in the leadership overestimate the conservatism of the British public. We're living in a much more atomised society. People want a tough stand on crime but they won't be told how to behave."



## CURRENCIES AND MONEY

## MARKETS REPORT

## Dollar falls

By Graham Bowley

The dollar experienced a sharp set-back amid nervous trading on the foreign exchanges yesterday. It was undermined by concerns surrounding the losses suffered by Sumitomo Corporation and by a marked rise in German interest rate expectations. Comments by US officials, which appeared to signal a tougher stance on trade with Japan, added to the dollar's weakness.

The announcement of Sumitomo's losses, which caused a rapid drop in copper prices, pushed the Australian dollar - which is closely linked to raw material prices - sharply lower, although it recovered slightly in later trading. The Swiss franc strengthened, as it benefited from its safe-haven status ahead of tomorrow's Russian presidential elections. Euro-mark futures contracts

fell for the second day running as investors appeared to interpret recent strong economic data as a sign that German interest rates might rise soon. The rise in German interest rate expectations pushed the D-Mark higher against most European currencies. The lira suffered most, amid doubts that the currency may not be able to rejoin the European exchange rate mechanism.

The pound was caught in the

## Dollar

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## WORLD INTEREST RATES

## MONEY RATES

June 14	Overnight	One month	Three months	Six months	One year	Long-term	Debt	Repo
Belgium	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
France	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
Germany	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
Italy	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
Netherlands	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
Spain	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
Sweden	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
Switzerland	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
UK	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
US	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
Japan	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-

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UK	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
US	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
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## EURO CURRENCY INTEREST RATES

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Switzerland	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
UK	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
US	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-
Japan	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	7.00	2.50	-

## THREE MONTH EURO CURRENCY FUTURES (LFFE) DM100 points of 100%

June 14	Open	Settle	Change	High	Low	Est. vol	Open Int.
Jun	92.00	92.00	-0.04	92.00	92.00	1,148	40,800
Jul	92.00	92.00	-0.04	92.00	92.00	1,148	40,800
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Jun	92.00	92.00	-0.04	92.00	92.00	1,148	40,800
Jul	92.00	92.00	-0.04	92.00	92.00	1,148	40,800
Aug	92.00	92.00	-0.04	92.00	92.00	1,148	40,800

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# Weekend FT

Chrystia Freeland explains why Russians who do not like Boris Yeltsin are prepared to grit their teeth and vote for him

## A nation groans under the lash of democracy



Nurtured by a miserable climate and a brutal history, Russian culture has always boasted a powerful masochist streak.

Anna Karenina, the country's favourite literary heroine, ends her adventures by throwing herself in front of a train. Khovanshchina, the Mussorgsky opera which has been the Bolshoi's biggest hit this year, comes to a terrible finale with most of the cast immolated on the pyre of a burning church. Even the nation's drinking habits - straight shots of vodka, in rapid succession - combine pain with pleasure.

In a canny move which most pundits think will help bring him victory in tomorrow's presidential poll, Boris Yeltsin, the Russian president, has found a way of marrying this gloomy national tradition with the usually more light-hearted art of political campaigning.

During the past few weeks, Yeltsin's advisers have blitzed the country's television screens with close-ups of prominent Russians and ordinary Russians who share one important trait: they really do not want to vote for the incumbent president.

General Boris Gromov, who presided over the Soviet Union's withdrawal from Afghanistan and was one of the earliest and most bitter critics of the Kremlin's decision to send troops to Chechnya, describes Yeltsin's war there as "a disaster".

But, after rectifying the president's faults, these reluctant Yeltsinists wring their hands and come to a unanimous conclusion. However bad Yeltsin may be, he is better than his communist opponents and, on these grounds, the televised parade of presidential supporters has been urging Russians to back him.

revolutionary effect on the country's political and economic elite. After months of agonised vacillation, Russia's most prominent citizens have mostly swallowed a wide variety of past ailments and come out in favour of the incumbent. The president's new fan club includes men Yeltsin has publicly humiliated, like Anatoly Chubais, the privatisation czar who was rudely dismissed from the cabinet in January. It has been joined by men who have urged Yeltsin not to run, such as Yegor Gaidar, a former prime minister who said this spring that a Yeltsin candidacy

**Kovalyev is one of the few prominent Russian liberals who is not supporting Yeltsin's bid for re-election**

would hand the Kremlin to the communists. Its ranks have even been swelled by a woman who has lost a son and a husband to Yeltsin's armies, Alla Dudayeva, widow of Dzhokhar Dudayev, the Chechen separatist leader who was reported to have died in a Russian attack earlier this year.

One man, however, has refused pointedly to join the Yeltsin bandwagon. Sergei Kovalyev, a biologist turned human rights campaigner who spent seven years in prison and three years in Arctic exile for his opposition to the communist regime, has today again become a dissident. Although he was one of Yeltsin's earliest backers when the president first rose to national power in 1990, Kovalyev is now one of the very few prominent Russian liberals who is not supporting the bid for re-election.

Only tomorrow's poll will show whether Yeltsin's "lesser-of-two-evils" argument has won over a majority of Russian voters, but, during the past few months, it has already had a

Russian politicians would dare accuse of naively underestimating the dangers posed by a communist comeback. And indeed, Kovalyev readily admits that, in spite of occasional efforts to pose as a western European-style social democratic party, the communist bloc led by Gennady Zyuganov represents a threat to Russia.

In the event of a communist victory, Kovalyev says: "Everything is as clear as a blueprint: there will be state regulation of prices, there will be an effort to redistribute property, there will be open and hidden inflation, shortages will again appear and, as a result, there will again be ration cards." He adds: "There will also be pressure on the press, there will be some measure of more broad repression."

Not a pretty picture. But, in the opinion of Kovalyev, a member of parliament who is often described as the "conscience" of Russia, the dangers of a communist victory are offset by one important constraint: "The communists today are not capable of creating any lasting sort of stability, they will very quickly precipitate their own downfall."

By contrast, here Kovalyev ventures into what he admits is heretical ground, Russia's leading human rights campaigner fears that a Yeltsin victory might be even more of a disaster than a communist triumph because with a second term Yeltsin could create a regime which would be both flawed and stable.

Kovalyev's worry is that, as a second term president, Yeltsin could preside over "a stabilisation which is extraordinarily dangerous" of a government which "routinely lies", which is pursuing a bloody war in Chechnya, which has been quietly clamping down on civil rights and whose leading functionaries break the law with the carefree

impunity of the Soviet era.

"The country has become a strange sort of chimera, it has a communist system of governance, under anti-communist slogans," Kovalyev argues. "In some respects, this system is more dangerous than the communist system. It is a very hypocritical system, a very lying system, a very false system and the worst thing is that instead of discrediting communism it discredits democracy, because while its methods are Soviet, its slogans are democratic."

There is something distinctly old-fashioned about Kovalyev's attachment to concepts such as truth and democracy, a noble but somehow jarring echo of the Soviet era human rights movement which seems out of place on the bustling streets of Moscow, where the former Soviet Union's grey uniformity has given way to an entrepreneurial riot of colour.

In the euphoric years of perestroika, when 70 years of communist dictatorship began to crumble, political idealism was briefly trendy. Long-banned dissident writings, such as Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*, appeared in print for the first time and were read voraciously. Tens of thousands of demonstrators attended pro-democracy rallies across the country in a wave of national mobilisation which reached a climax in the summer of 1991, when thousands of protesters massed outside the White House on the banks of the Moscow river to block a hardline communist coup.

But, just as the hero of that demonstration, the bold leader of the Russian federation who defied the plotters from atop a tank, has settled into the more routine pleasures of ruling the country from the comfort of the Kremlin, most of his supporters have traded the heady delights of democratic

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Joe Rogaly

## A little ethnic confusion

We need to contemplate why some groups flourish and others do not

Help! We are about to talk of race, and I am tongue-tied. Well, almost. I am certain that racial bigotry is lethal, but what about ethnic pride? Is there not something to be gained from the latter? The question goes round and round. We sages are clear-headed, long-sighted, secure in our omniscience, always right, ever willing to listen to the voice of reason. If you believe that, I have a nice line in city-centre bridges to sell you at a special price. No, the truth is, I am confused.

Standard liberalism, melting-pot multiculturalism, denial of difference, universal detribalisation, are all fine and dandy, but how do you behave if you know not who on earth you are? Against that, we can be certain that aggressive assertion of racial or ethnic identity can lead to dreadful horrors.

You recall the infamous examples: the German-engineered Holocaust of 1938-45, or the recent massacres in Rwanda and former Yugoslavia. They head a gruesome list, to which we must this week add the burning of black churches in the southern United States.

If the murderous 20th century has taught us any lesson it is that tribal hostility kills. Yet humans need a sense of belonging. Increasing numbers

of us are living without the bulwarks of religion or stable families, unconstrained by absolute values, rootless in cities, slaves to the cult of the individual. If on top of all that we are neither Welsh nor Kurd, we have no anchor.

It is just possibly a case of drifters vs the rooted communities, with the floating population of lone individuals set to lose. Tribes whose members know who they are should prosper. Take California's newly arrived Koreans and other east Asians. They are rapidly advancing, making a place for themselves. Perhaps some of their economic success is a consequence of their respect for education.

Adherence to the traditional family, ethnic cohesion, pride in their own tribe, may have made their contribution. Wherever there are newcomers with the requisite traditions, the growth-effect lasts for at least a generation.

The equivalent community in Britain is Indian. This is a go-go element, yeast in the island mix. Britain's Indian population numbered 640,000 in 1991, according to an analysis of the 1991 census published by the government's new Office for National Statistics (ONS) this week. That could bring it close to 1m by, say, the end of the decade, although it is not rising on an inexorable curve. Call the

total millennium population 55m and you have something approaching 2 per cent of the people of Britain originating in India.

Did I say go-go? Unlike most other ethnic groups, Indians are almost as likely as whites to be in employment, although the Chinese score highest in this league. But then there are just 157,000 Chinese people in Britain. They also top the

list on self-employment, as you might expect, with Indians next. Yet more Indians buy their houses than anyone else. Their owner-occupancy rate is 80 per cent, against 60 per cent for the whites and Chinese.

In common with other south Asians (that is, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis), Indians live with their families and extended families. They get married before having babies. The community is a mosaic of linguistic and religious groups. Yet many of them "share a set of values, beliefs,

aspirations and a clear sense of identity", according to one of the authors in the ONS report. They seek to better themselves. They are more likely than whites to be in the professional classes. Individuals vary, but as a group they are coherent, upwardly mobile, successful, a new treasure for Britain.

Other groups of new Britishers are given less favourable ratings by the ONS editor. In spite of their structured lives, Pakistanis are likely to boast fewer qualifications than Indians. Bangladeshis are the least well-prepared for advancement. Among other migrants, blacks from Africa, mostly students or their offspring, are rich in academic prizes.

Young Caribbean black men suffer "dramatically" high rates of unemployment; their sisters tend to pass more exams, and get more jobs. To me, this last point may be explained by the propensity of black mothers to keep their daughters at home doing their schoolwork. Their sons are not so easily controlled.

That's enough. We cannot regurgitate 246 pages of analysis here. The significance of the ONS report lies in its attempt to present facts about ethnic groups residing within Britain. You get a feel for the discrimination in employment

endured by some of them, but little is said about the reality of daily life for non-white Britons. Outside certain areas many of them live in danger of being abused or attacked. Yet it is not my purpose to rehearse that sorry tale today.

What we need to contemplate is why some groups flourish and others do not. Certainly there are plenty of theories about how Asian culture in, say, Singapore, China and Japan, contributes to economic development. It may be that a loyalty to the old country, or at least to its social customs, gives inner strength to migrant peoples who you might have thought would be weakened by stress. If so, we in the industrialised west face a problem. Every day brings down another piece of the social structures that formerly sustained us. We are becoming nations of anonymous blobs in beehive cities. No wonder some of us behave badly.

Britain is committed to predominantly Christian religious education in schools, under a law whose spirit is rarely observed in practice. We do not favour teaching in languages other than English. We are both prescriptive and tolerant, aware of the advantages of a common national curriculum, bemused by the ideas of Moslem or Jewish schools. Like the US, we are multi-racial, but ethnically confused.

As a Soviet-era dissident, Kovalyev can voice his unorthodox opinion with a measure of political impunity: he is one man whom few contemporary

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## PERSPECTIVES

## The Nature of Things

## Danger in a little yellow box

A simple home test can detect the UK's biggest source of radioactivity. Andrew Derrington reports

When I was on holiday in Cornwall two weeks ago, a large envelope from the National Radiological Protection Board dropped through the letterbox of the cottage where I was staying. Inside were two little yellow plastic boxes with instructions to place one in the living room and one in the bedroom and to send them back to NRPB in three months' time.

The yellow boxes contain strips of a special plastic that detects radon. Radon is a colourless odourless gas, the heaviest of the noble gases which include helium, neon and argon. Like them it is chemically inert, but unlike them it is radioactive. It is produced from the decay of Uranium 238 and Thorium 232, both of which occur naturally at low levels in many different types of rock, including granites, limestones and shales.

Because radon is a gas, it can seep out of the rock and into our homes via the subsoil. Radon itself

is fairly harmless because it is chemically inert. "You just breathe it in and breathe it out again," says Gerry Kendall of the NRPB. However, it decays by way of a chain of radioactive "daughter" elements (including polonium, lead and bismuth) to produce stable isotopes of lead.

Because they are produced as isolated atoms, the radioactive daughters of radon are extremely reactive chemically. They form complexes that attach to microscopic dust particles; these can lodge in the lung where they deliver their radiation to maximum effect.

The dangers of radon have been known for much longer than the chemistry. In the 16th century Agricola wrote: "Miners are sometimes killed by the pestilential air they breathe... their lungs rot away." He was right: in recent years 12 studies have shown a link between radon levels and the rate of lung cancer in miners.

Although most of the damage is not done by radon but by its radioactive daughter elements, the chemistry of the radioactive progeny is complicated and variable. So the best way to predict the level of hazard is to measure radon itself, Kendall says.

Like several of its daughters, radon emits alpha particles - each composed of two protons and two neutrons. Alpha particles do not penetrate far but they are the heaviest and arguably the most damaging form of ionising radiation. Inside the yellow box they make tiny scratches in the plastic. The scratches can be enhanced chemically and counted by an optical reader to measure the radon levels over three months.

NRPB has already processed yellow boxes from more than 240,000 homes in national surveys of England, Scotland and Wales. The results are impressive. If you are

worried about radiation, forget nuclear weapons tests, cosmic rays and discharges from power stations. Radon delivers four times as much radioactivity as all of them put together.

Even in London, where radon levels are among the lowest in the UK, it is responsible for about half the environmental radiation. It delivers about the same annual dose to a London householder as a nuclear power station worker would receive at work. Of course neither dose is thought to be hazardous, but in high radon areas, which include parts of Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, Derbyshire

and Northamptonshire, it is a different story.

As a result of its previous surveys, NRPB has established an "action level" of 200 becquerels per cubic metre of air (a becquerel corresponds to one atomic disintegration per second) and identified the areas of the country where 1 per cent of the homes exceed this level. The present NRPB survey focuses on these affected areas. It aims to identify all the homes that exceed the action level and to recommend remedial measures. In some parts of Devon and Cornwall, more than 30 per cent of houses are above the action level.

Kendall says radon "is a vastly greater hazard than the things people worry about". If you live all your life in a house at the action level you have a one in 30 chance of dying of lung cancer, he says. The risk is higher for smokers (one in 10) than for non-smokers (one in 100). But even if you live in an affected area, there is no reason to panic. The radon test is free\* and measures can easily be taken to reduce levels if they are high.

The basic approach is to prevent soil gas from entering the living area of the house - by underfloor ventilation, by simply sealing all the holes or by installing an under-floor "radon sump" which reverses the net flow of gas from the under-floor space into the house.

And after the work has been done, you can get another set of yellow boxes for a free re-test. \*Contact Radon Survey, NRPB, Chilton, Didcot, OX11 0RQ. The author is professor of psychology at the University of Nottingham.

## Minding Your Own Business

## Builder of shoes steps out and up

Grania Langdon-Down meets a woman who turned redundancy from a footwear firm into a virtue

Making Rosemary Dartnell redundant was the biggest favour anyone could have done her. She had always wanted to run her own business designing shoes and had even drawn up eight or nine business plans. But her job as buying director for a big shoe retailer had always kept her too busy to take them any further.

When she first learnt of the redundancy, she was angry and felt badly treated. But when the shock wore off, Dartnell, 38, realised her opportunity and decided she would not work for anyone else again. "It was the push I needed," she said.

She had started in the shoe trade aged 18 when she joined Carvela, part of the Lotus chain, as a trainee manager in her home town of Southampton. Within 18 months, she took charge of her first shop.

On her 30th birthday in 1988, she was appointed buying director for Carvela, and continued in that job when the company merged with Kurt Geiger three years later. But in June 1993, she lost her job.

"Three months later, I started a specialist footwear consultancy, Rosemary Dartnell Associates, with my friend Kate Jordan, who is an accountant, as company secretary. I had about £40,000 from my redundancy and savings. The plan was to set up RDA so I could earn money as a consultant pretty well straight away with few overheads," Dartnell explained.

Florentine, her own shoe design label, took longer to develop. The aim was to create an image for the label that would appeal to sophisticated consumers, aged from 30 to 50, who were prepared to spend between £60 and £90 on a classic shoe.

"There was a lot to get right

with the logo and packaging so, even though Florentine was incorporated in January 1994, we did not issue a single sales invoice until the July," she said.

"I made my first mistake during that time when I recruited a salesman. The pressure to meet his salary and the costs of travelling up and down the country meant compromises in the people who we were selling to, and the credit ability of some was not what it ought to be.

"After a year, he left us and I took on all the selling. I now feel very much more in control of the business."

In the first 14 months to March 1995, Florentine made a £26,000 loss on a turnover of £280,000 from about 10,000 sales. "Technically, we were insolvent at times during that first year, which was terrifying," she said.

"However, we survived with the help of two Italian manufacturers who I had worked with for many years and who fortunately believed in me and extended good credit terms."

By the end of the second year, Florentine was showing a small profit. "I have not taken a salary from the business yet but hope to be able to do that in year three."

Dartnell designs two ranges a year and each involves between 16 and 22 different styles. She works closely with the Italian manufacturers, travelling regularly to Tuscany. "Some shoes are art forms but who would ever wear them?" she asks.

In between seasonal bursts of designing and selling, Dartnell slots in consultancy work, which brought in about £50,000 last year. "I now need to free up time to plot our next moves. We are developing a computer system with a fairly sophisticated



Rosemary Dartnell: 'Some shoes are art forms but who would ever wear them?'

Colin Jones

made to order but Dartnell keeps up to 4,000 pairs in stock at any time - even though it ties up capital of between £50,000 and £70,000 - to meet extra orders.

In between seasonal bursts of designing and selling, Dartnell slots in consultancy work, which brought in about £50,000 last year. "I now need to free up time to plot our next moves. We are developing a computer system with a fairly sophisticated

accountancy package, which will cost about £8,000, and will probably take on someone to help with the administration soon," she said.

"Turnover is now just over £300,000 representing about 30,000 sales a year. Sales of the winter 1996 range are up 15 per cent on last year and my plan is that after five years, sales will have doubled," she said.

Dartnell's biggest outlay is £30,000 a year on advertising

each season's collection with a list of their 80 stockists in the UK and Ireland. One of her next projects is to study possible export markets - the most likely being in northern Europe. She is also discussing ideas with a Japanese contact.

She is constantly aware of the risk of bad debts. "We had two which were hard for us to swallow. We do a huge amount of credit checking before we send a single pair of shoes

out." After surviving a difficult start during the recession, she feels the economy is picking up and people are spending more.

"But we are like farmers - the weather makes a huge difference. When the sun shines it is like turning on a tap." ■ Florentine and Rosemary Dartnell Associates, 56 Darley Road, Stamford Hill, London, N16 5JS. Tel: 0181-800 1767. Fax: 0181-300 1768.

## Letter from Johannesburg

## Youth still in the vanguard

These days there is an unmistakable modern character to the plight of young people in Soweto, the sprawling South Western Township, created by the apartheid regime to be the biggest labour camp in Africa.

BMW and cellular phones are not unusual sights on the mostly unmapped backstreets. Small businesses compete to clean the dust out of private swimming pools, and you can even join the National party in one of the few shopping malls.

Tomorrow is a public holiday. Exactly 20 years ago 100 Soweto pupils died in protests against Afrikaans as the language of instruction. Their resistance to the police, the army and apartheid's version of their national history was to last 15 years, propelling South African youth to the forefront of the liberation movement.

"The slogan 'Liberation before Education' which launched the 1976 uprising, has been superseded by non-racial, multi-lingual teaching. And the customary advice of President Nelson Mandela to unsuspecting children all over the world is a stern 'Go to school'."

Like their peers in the developed world, Sowetan youths are ambitious, conscious of the revolution in their country, and eager to prosper. Unlike their western counterparts, they are convinced their world will treat them more kindly than it did their parents.

Such optimism is born from the ruins of racial oppression, which officially ended with the all-race election of April 1994. But it is tempered by reality: the perils that worry parents everywhere reach extreme proportions in South Africa.

Jobs are scarce: only 7 in every 100 school leavers will find formal employment this year. Their numbers are rising, with half the national population under 18.

Diversions are many and dangerous: crime is epidemic, HIV infection has risen by more than 80 per cent this year to affect about 4 per cent of the population, and narcotics are in abundant supply.

Despite, or perhaps because of, this rapid change, black youths remain as highly politicised today as in 1976. They are generally portrayed as angry, indignant and a potential threat to South Africa's new-found stability - a powerful argument for building national solidarity. Deputy president Thabo Mbeki, the likely heir to Mandela's throne, often suggests that "When the poor rise,

they will rise against us all". Thabo Mbeki, a member of the ANC's Youth League, agrees: "The youth are the most militant, because of their energies and because they are impatient. They will become a threat if that energy is not channelled."

But so far, South Africa's youth have taken the lessons of the country's political transition to heart. Much as Soweto has risen above apartheid origins to become a uniquely sophisticated township, its youth are a kind of African vanguard. Last year, a pan-African survey by advertising agency McCann-Erickson found unanimous support for the principles of negotiation, cultural and racial tolerance and the rejection of violence among young people. Mandela would be consoled by the finding that youths are "hugely preoccupied" with education, widely seen as "the only reliable means to escape poverty".

With unemployment among township blacks aged 15-30 running at 50 per cent, many who have escaped poverty have also chosen to escape Soweto. Like their country, its 3m inhabitants have one foot in the first world. Unlike the poor in other parts of Africa, most have seen, if not tasted, the spoils of a more affluent culture - and young people aspire to share in it.

To this day, the aspirational Sowetan mother of my friend Milton has not forgiven her wayward son for spending money intended for his ballroom dancing class on learning to play tennis instead. Happily, Milton has overcome this social handicap and joined the exodus of many black professionals by moving 40km to a new home in Jo'burg.

Like many emigrants, he pines for aspects of the lifestyle they left behind. Consequently, the youngest of the new black middle class spend much of their leisure time driving from the metropolitan suburbs to the township.

At weekends, Sowetan youths throw hectic street parties fuelled by "cell phones" - their name for assorted quarts of liquor sold at inflated prices to fund the events. All 11 of South Africa's official languages are spoken in Soweto. But few can understand the secret language of the hijackers, gangsters and drug dealers who flock to the same parties. And nobody knows how many are too young to vote.

Mark Ashurst

Continued from Page 1

revolution for the diligent pursuit of more material, individual, dreams.

These post-communist values are neatly captured by a Yeltsin campaign clip targeting those voters for whom the struggle for democracy has been eclipsed by the quest to be cool.

To the throbbing beat of rock music, Russian television screens display the western fashion items Yeltsin's reforms have made available to a prosperous minority: baseball caps and basketball shoes. In a dizzying video montage, these objects of desire are contrasted with the ugly accoutrements of the Soviet era and of today's impoverished majority: a tattered Russian fur hat, turned upside down to collect alms from passers-by and a battered pair of Russian work-boots.

In his thick, politburo style

glasses and ill-cut suit - even the communists are better dressed - it is easy to dismiss Kovalyev as an irrelevant, and perhaps slightly pathetic, critic of a president smart enough to appeal to Russia's young voters in their own language of baseball caps and basketball shoes. That is certainly the verdict of many of Yeltsin's most sophisticated supporters, who see Kovalyev's stern political judgment as an anachronistic hold-over from the stark moral choices the Soviet regime imposed on each of its subjects.

Kovalyev's attitude is inappropriate today, many of Russia's most brilliant political scientists argue, because the Kremlin's wild, titful, ambitious efforts to create democracy and a market economy unavoidably involve compromise and backsliding. All that really matters, Yeltsin's grudging backers believe, is to continue to build some version of capitalism, and democracy will

inevitably follow. Give the Russian masses baseball caps and eventually they will want freedom as well.

But Kovalyev derides this automatic coupling of markets and democracy as economic romanticism. The economic romantics, says Kovalyev, think something like this: "Let us introduce market reforms, we will have a market economy and it will automatically create democracy... and all of it will simply follow from competition and so forth and presto! you will have a democratic political system."

Kovalyev thinks this approach is naive. "A market economy can, without a doubt, operate in a totalitarian or authoritarian regime," he says, and in his opinion that is the direction in which Yeltsin's Russia is heading.

Ironically, Yeltsin's brilliantly planned and executed election campaign has given die-hard former dissidents such as Kovalyev more grounds

than ever for attacking the president's democratic credentials.

The mass media, including privately owned television channels and newspapers which had tried to build up a reputation for objectivity before the campaign season, have become a pro-Yeltsin chorus almost as biased as, albeit more sophisticated than, their Soviet-era predecessors.

Senior members of Yeltsin's campaign team openly boast of placing fake scare stories about the communists in complaint, usually liberal, newspapers, and regional governors have explicitly instructed local journalists to run Yeltsin campaign releases verbatim.

Opposition candidates are routinely subject to petty bureaucratic harassment: halls they have booked are withdrawn at the last minute; they are barred from holding meetings in public; their retinue is housed in the worst hotel in town.

Absurdly, these little humiliations are dealt out not only to Zyuganov, Yeltsin's only serious rival, but also to politicians such as Mikhail Gorbachev, whose impact on tomorrow's poll is expected to

**Kovalyev argues that the democrats' compromise today will destroy them**

be marginal at best, but who, as the father of *perestroika*, some would say merits more respectful treatment during his first run at elected office.

All of these pre-election violations could be overshadowed by a crime everyone - from Yeltsin's staunchest supporters to his most determined opponents - is sure the Kremlin

will try to commit if the need and opportunity arise: falsify the results of the vote. Gen Pavel Grachev did nothing to increase public faith in the probity of the regime when he announced last week that, in early overseas voting, Russia's sailors had unanimously backed Yeltsin. Under Russian law, the ballot boxes were not even to have been opened until tomorrow night.

So great is the cynicism about tomorrow's voting that, at a gala banquet during a recent summit meeting of central and eastern European heads of state, the Ukrainian president shared the following joke with his Polish counterpart. The day after the polls, the chief electoral officer calls Yeltsin, saying he has both good news and bad news. The bad news is that Zyuganov has won 55 per cent of the vote. But the good news is that Yeltsin has won 65 per cent.

For many of Russia's democratic politicians, watching

their country's political practices become the butt of their neighbour's after-dinner humour, is embarrassing. But they are reluctantly backing the president to avert the greater evil of a communist victory.

"Our democrats say, yes it is very humiliating for us to support Yeltsin, but the tragic situation in the country forces us to do this. We have no alternative... and as soon as we elect him we will move back into opposition," Kovalyev says.

Applying the unbending moral yardstick, which critics might say is suited to Brezhnev's authoritarian state but is unsuited to the ambiguities of Russia's nascent democracy, Kovalyev argues that the democrats' compromise today will destroy them as a political force after the elections.

In an essay published this spring, Kovalyev makes his case with brutal clarity: "Allow me to speak in prison camp terms. There was a con-

cept in the camps of 'being lowered': a person was disgraced in the prison zone and banished by the camp community; he became a pariah. Often, this was made official by a ritual sexual act, making him a passive homosexual. That person was at the bottom of the ladder. Democrats who feel forced to support Yeltsin will be in that position, and organised opposition will be impossible. People will say: You supported him. How can you now talk about democratic principles? Where were your principles then?"

Only the dross of Russian dissidents, the man who is seen as the inheritor of Andrei Sakharov's uncompromising political tradition, could get away with a comparison of voting for Yeltsin with being sodomised. But nearly 1,000 years of Tatar overlords, autocratic tsars and communist dictators have left Russians accustomed to abasing themselves before their rulers. Tomorrow, as they grit their teeth and vote for a president few trust or admire, many Russians will be vowing that it is the last time.

Chess No 1,432 (p. 7) The game ended 1 Rf5 Qxb7? 2 Rd5! Kxf5 3 Qxb5! Qxb5 stalemate, missed 1... Rf4 (threat Qh1-h4 mate) wins for Black.



## PERSPECTIVES

## The French actress who won't play safe

Nigel Andrews talks to Isabelle Huppert, one of Europe's leading cinematic stars. He finds a woman who makes a virtue out of silence

Radiant in strawberry blonde hair and grey trouser suit, Isabelle Huppert strode into the National Theatre restaurant, whisked me from the table near the bar where I was waiting - "It's too noisy" - and sat us down near the doorway. I foresaw problems and they came. After 20 minutes what seemed like the entire membership of the women's institutes of south London entered and sat down at the nearest table.

"Oh my God," muttered Huppert as the air shrieked with voices and scraped with chair-legs. Soon the clang of cutlery was added. Yet France's leading screen actress went on to give me a masterclass in barely broken concentration.

Two hours away from her 35th performance on stage as Schiller's Mary Stuart, Huppert had survived worse cacophonies than this: notably from first-night critics who rallied at her imperfect grasp of English speech and intonation.

"It's not pleasant reading such things," she says. "But a performance changes during a run and the audience has been on my side. I couldn't be oblivious to the bad reviews, but I think some of them may be a case of..." She pauses. "Xenophobia?" I ask. "A little bit. Maybe. Yes."

By the time I saw the play just before we met, things had clearly changed. The performances had sweep, passion, subtle variation - and comprehensibility.

Yet it must be daunting, I said, to have to deliver all that headlong emotion night after night. Huppert weeps real tears in almost every scene - while making sure that each pair-shaped English syllable hits the back of the stalls.

"The more emotional I am, the more I speed up. Maybe I should slow down more. But it's a passionate role. Mary takes a complete emotional journey during the play. She's been in jail for years and now we see her 'burst'. The balance of her life is burst apart, and we see that drama all through the play until the end when she faces death and finds a kind of release."

All this unbuttoned passion is startling from an actress who for years was France's Mademoiselle Anonim. From *The Lovers* to

*Madame Bovary* Huppert has specialised in a kind of rarefied victimhood. In early films especially the eyes rarely blinked, the wide mouth was a down-turned *mouse* and the pale face was animated more by its freckles than by any changing expressions. She was European cinema's Rorschach test. Audiences loved her.

More and more over time, though, other Hupperts have stolen into the mother-identity. She was a skittish manhunter in Pialat's *Loulou*. She lit up Chabrol's *La Cerémonie* as a prattling village gossip turned murderer. And long before either she was an enchanting, impulsive presence, cast as an immigrant hooker in that great Hollywood cause *claire, Huppert's Gate*.

When I tell her I love this film she says "Good on you! It honours you!" For her, Michael Cimino's epic was a bold bid to bring European movie values to an America that did not or would not understand them, at least when applied to its own beloved form the western. Hence, the rejection by both critics and public of a \$44m movie whose failure broke a studio.

"I think the film was deeply and violently against certain American beliefs about its own country," says Huppert. "It was against the idealism of the conquest of the west. Also in form it was so unclassical. Cimino talked very well about it: for him it was like a dream, you could think of the whole story as coming out of the hero Kris Kristoferson's imagination. I love the film, it's so poetic."

Huppert's Gate also tested the actress's talent for sustaining mood and feeling through the delays and vagaries of film-making.

"You don't let it affect your work. There is waiting; there is shooting out of sequence; there is tension; but acting is a job."

"It's not an artistic profession," she claims. "It's very pragmatic. I don't believe we are artists *maudis*, 'tormented artists'. An actor shapes his role as he'd shape a loaf of bread or piece of furniture. When Simone Signoret made her film in England *Room At The Top*, for which she won an Oscar, she shot her most emotional scene on her first day. No preparation. Probably she could have done it 20 times.



Isabelle Huppert: 'The more emotional I am, the more I speed up. Maybe I should slow down more'

You always think magical moments can happen only once, yet as an actress you're able to do it over and over."

But isn't the repetitiveness irksome? In cinema you have to repeat individual takes *ad infinitum*. In the theatre it's whole performances.

But none is the same as another, insists Huppert, as she has found again on *Mary Stuart*. "It's so mysterious why you have such different collective reactions. One night they laugh at a line, another they're silent. One night they clap right away at the end, the next they wait."

"At the same time an audience can be completely abstract, like a black hole. I feel completely different depending on whether I can see the audience or the lights block them from me. I'm very anxious when I cannot see them. It's like what they say about jealousy in love. If you see the person who has made you jealous you are somehow less insecure, more comforted. It's the familiarity."

So on the French stage she has favoured avant-garde directors like Robert Wilson and Peter Zadek who often light the spectators as well as the actors. And a Paris production of *A Doll's House* directed by Deborah Warner is planned which may also go against the traditional proscenium grain.

On screen, too, Huppert has never

settled for safe choices. She has worked with every innovative and influential French director, including those great Nouvelle Vague twins Chabrol and Godard. Although their working methods differ - Chabrol scripts, Godard doesn't - Huppert values both because they let her create her character.

"On *Every Man For Himself* Godard came to Montana when I was working on *Heaven's Gate*, took me out to lunch and told me just one sentence about my role. 'She has the face of suffering.' That was enough. I loved that idea alone."

For Chabrol she has played a whole gallery of anti-heroines from a poisoner (*Violette Noziers*) to a wartime abortionist (*L'Histoire d'Elle*) to the multiple murderer of *La Cerémonie*. With this director, too, she is expected to join up the dots herself. "I had a letter about the new role he is writing for me to shoot in November. He said, 'We really don't know anything at all about the character. And he knows that's exactly what I want.'"

Moviegoers will next see Huppert in a film of Goethe's *Elective Affinities*, directed by the Taviani brothers. I saw it at Cannes and express my misgivings to her. Good as the actors are, isn't this derailed costume movie - German novel, French cast, Italian directors

- a nasty taste of where European cinema is now going? The pudding era.

Huppert leaps in. "I haven't seen the film yet, but I didn't feel a contradiction in doing it. It's a universal story, it's not rooted in Germany. And you know, for years there has been a tradition of exchange and co-production in Europe - think of Visconti using American and English actors - yet all of a sudden people raise this Euro-pudding thing."

Yet France in recent times, I say, has not been so indifferent to frontiers that it welcomes Hollywood into its land. Witness Gaud. "You have to be subtle about Gaud," she says. "Like everyone else I love American cinema. It's so easy to be prim and insular and take an anti-Hollywood stance. But it's not that. It is simply for protection. How many French films do you see in England? How many in Germany? How many German films are being made in Germany?"

"You have to be realistic if you don't want the whole world showing only American films. We love Woody Allen. We love Scorsese. But we are reacting to a situation where an American film is shown in 50 cinemas across France while French films have difficulty being shown at all."

I begin to feel guilty about politics Huppert bet up about film politics as the clockhands move nearer to *Mary Stuart*. Soon she will descend to her dressing-room, slap on the make-up, exclude unwanted visitors - "It's important to be lonely for the hour before" - and then face the lights and the minor but insistent turbulence of stage fright.

None of this sounds very tempting to an outsider. So why be an actress?

"It's funny. As I was coming to the theatre today I asked myself that. I'm not sure, but I came up with this answer: it's just to be silent. That sounds contradictory, because obviously acting means going through words. But it's some one else's words, so for me acting has a lot to do with keeping oneself secret. The more you say about someone else through their words, the less you are able to say about yourself."

"I was thinking about this because I have been silent all day and I was thinking, oh what a relief. I'm so happy that I don't have to talk to anyone, just because I have this work to do tonight."

Except for me, I point out.

"Yes, except for this one hour!"

## Keeping the faith on the Mount of Moses

Bruce Clark cares about an enclave that survived Crusaders and Saracens

Before he felt the call, Father Paul worked as a groom for the greatest horse trainer in Australia. His mild, grey-bearded face still lights up when a visitor arrives from Ireland with some gossip about horseflesh. But these days, camels are the only quadrupeds he ever sees at St Catherine's monastery, high up in the stark, awe-inspiring beauty of Egypt's Mount Sinai.

In the blazing, bone-dry heat of the desert, which consumes some things very quickly and preserves others almost indefinitely, it seems only a twinkling of an eye since AD650 when the monastery's towering granite walls were constructed by Emperor Justinian.

Nor does it feel as though more than a few moments have elapsed since the execution, about the same time, of the monastery's most famous work of art: a startling image of Christ Pantocrator, the Ruler of the Universe, made in Constantinople by the encaustic method of icon-painting - molten wax poured on to wood.

Neither the colours nor the icon's triumphant theological message - that Christ was entirely human and entirely divine - have dimmed in the slightest over the past 14 centuries. And this is only one of several thousand icons in the monastery's 10 chapels: of all the Byzantine religious paintings extant in the world, at least half are at St Catherine's.

The surroundings, natural and man-made, would prompt the most prosaic of souls to follow the example of the desert fathers of the Church and ponder the metaphysical. "We're like the fishermen in the Gospel," says Father Paul, in his Sydney accent. "We have all had to abandon our fishing nets, our worldly engagements, whatever they were." Few visitors would guess at the previous enthusiasms of this gentle, black-robed figure as he escorts visitors around this fabulous desert fortress, built around a vigorously growing shrub that is acknowledged by Christians, Muslims and Jews as the burning bush seen by Moses.

Like the 16 other members of

## Exhibition dates and information

An exhibition entitled "St Catherine's: Past, Present and Future" will be on show at the Foundation for Hellenic Culture, 88 Brook Street, London, W1, from June 19 to July 19. (Opening hours: 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday, plus 6pm to 8pm on Wednesdays and 10.30am to 2pm on Saturdays.)

For further information about St Catherine's Foundation can be obtained from its headquarters at 18 Cuzson Street, London W1V 7AB. Tel: 0171-465 3545.

this remarkable community, all but one of whom - a shy young man from Devon - are Greek. Father Paul is well used to rising at 4am every day to intone a three-hour service. Winter mornings can be freezing, and in the summer the mosquitoes are murderous.

But there is a pleasant, bustling atmosphere as the brotherhood gathers on a Sunday morning for cups of grainy coffee. With an unself-consciousness that would put the average tongue-tied Anglican to shame, the chatter switches back and forward from the practical to the theological.

Father Sofrony, who has the

shrewd eyes of the Peloponnesian farmer he was brought up to be, dispenses theological insights and tips on tree husbandry in an ebullient tone that hardly varies.

"Nobody would ever become a monk if they knew how hard it was at times," he confides. "But you get moments of indescribable joy that make up for everything you have given up. It's all down to the grace of God." Yet St Catherine's, which ranks high among the spiritual and artistic glories of eastern Christendom, would not have survived a millennium and a half if the monks there had not known how to

act in the world, even as they renounced its temptations.

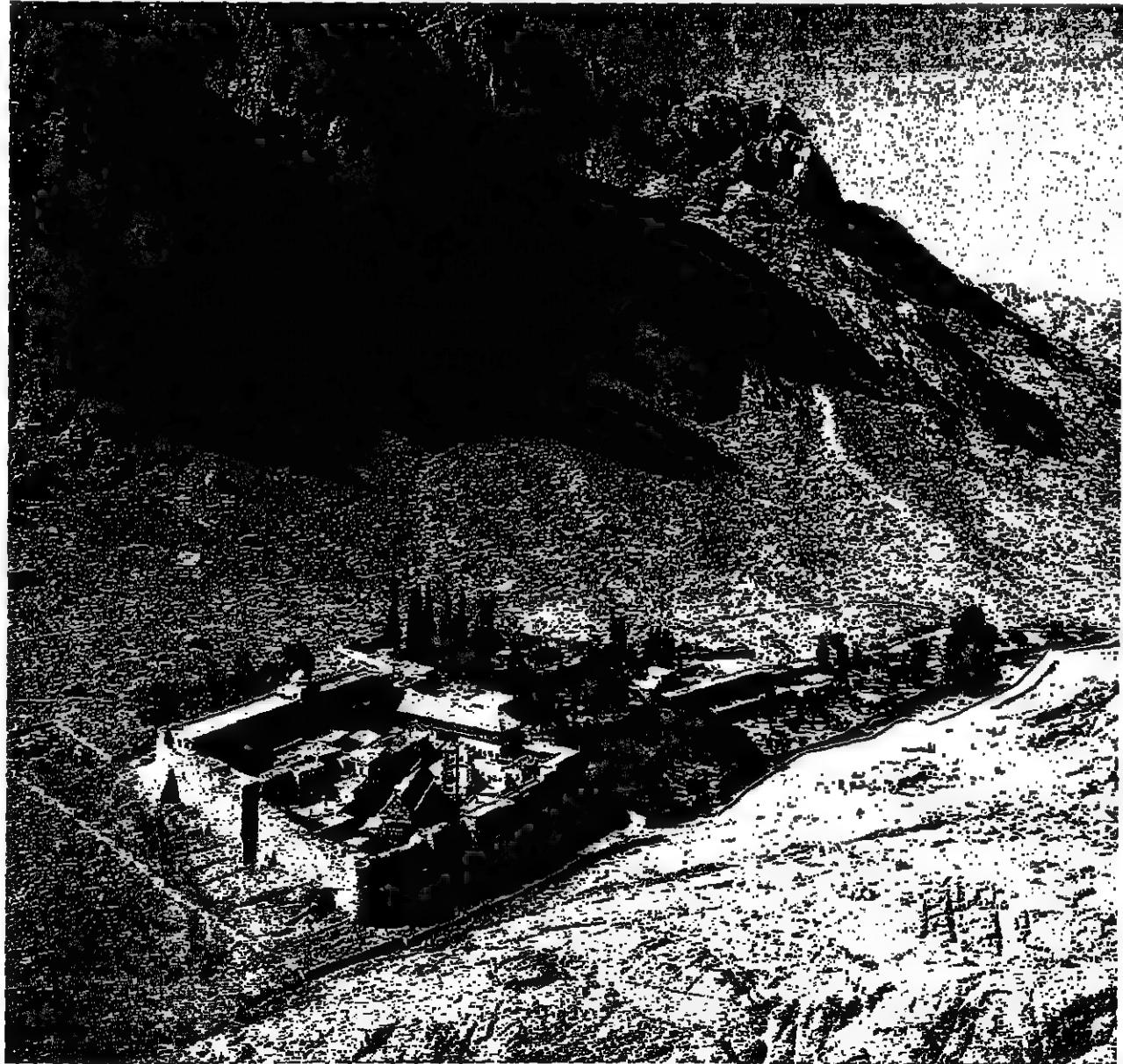
To this day, the monks speak with pride of the diplomatic skills which enabled their predecessors to maintain the warmest of relations with Islam and western Christendom, without compromising their own doctrinal integrity. Beside the tower of the 6th century bastille, with a bell donated by a Russian tsar, there is a minaret - not in active use but shown to every visitor as a symbol of peaceful co-existence between Muslims and Christians.

Among the prize exhibits in a collection of parchment and papyrus manuscripts - their value and antiquity rank with the library of the Vatican - there is a copy of an affirmation by the Prophet Mohammed himself that he acknowledges the monks as guardians of the mountains of Moses. The Prophet's imprimatur helped, in turn, to guarantee the monks' respect in the eyes of the nomadic Bedouin community whose lives have been closely intertwined with the monastery for centuries.

Dealings with western Christendom have been equally subtle. Crusaders passed through, carving names and coat of arms on the walls of the refectory - but the monastery's relations with the Roman Catholic world have never descended into acrimony. The same spirit of ecumenical diplomacy will fill the air this week as The Ritz hotel in London accommodates an unusual visitor: Archbishop Damianos, a bustling Greek cleric who leads the community to which he has devoted more than half his 61 years.

Along with the Prince of Wales, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop Damianos is co-patron of a foundation determined to save the monastery and the holy mountain on which it stands from its newest challenges. For the holder of such an ancient office, the Greek prelate is full of modern ideas: he longs to see the library digitally photographed and made available to scholars over the Internet.

Projects like this require money and expertise, and that



St Catherine's monastery atop Mount Sinai: a site under threat from wealthy western visitors

is where a trip to London comes in. With the patrons' collective blessing, an exhibition of the monastery's icons, manuscripts and artefacts will be opened in London next week, in an effort to raise international awareness of the monastery's heritage and the challenges it now faces.

The organisers are the St Catherine's Foundation, a committee of academics, churchmen and emigre Greeks, strongly supported by the Lais ship-owning family, who have responded to an appeal by Prince Charles for an international effort to help preserve the religious community.

Mount Sinai's apparently inhospitable climate has helped to preserve its status as a holy place for the three great monotheistic religions of the world. But it is under threat from an adversary that could

succeed where Saracens and Crusaders failed - the risk of uncontrolled development.

Carefully managed, the tourism that is beginning to reach the region in large proportions could be a boon to the living standards of the Bedouin, an important source of foreign exchange for the Egyptian exchequer.

There are some disturbing signs, however. The nearby village of St Catherine's is beginning to sprawl uncontrollably, creating an immediate danger of polluting the ground waters. Already, some Bedouins have been poisoned by wells which their ancestors have always used.

For reasons nobody understands, but possibly connected with an underground stream changing direction, salty water is seeping upwards through some of the monastery's foundations, eating away at the granite. If this process continues, buildings which have stood for 1,400 years will start to fall.

The advent of wealthy western visitors has also led to huge disparities of income among the Bedouin community, creating a risk that some will resort to violent crime or smuggling.

To somehow balance the demands of tourism, ecology and social welfare, the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency has entrusted a Brussels-based consultancy to carry out a five-year land management programme. But its success will be tough to go.

So far, the monastery is able to cope, at a pinch, with up to 300 tourists a day. They stream through its gates to see the burning bush, the basilica and a few of the most important

icons. Visitors with a serious interest in Orthodox Christianity are encouraged to pay more extended visits and venerate the relics of St Catherine which, from a religious point of view, are the monastery's greatest treasure.

But the monastery has lost the asset which has been, for so many centuries, its greatest weapon against the depredations of the outside world - extreme remoteness.

As recently as the 1960s, provisions had to be brought to the monastery by a three-day camel ride. Now cars can drive straight up to its towering walls and park beneath Justinian's cross.

The world which Father Paul and his brothers abandoned is returning to haunt them - and nobody can tell whether today's desert fathers will survive the impact.



St Gregory of Nazianzus: frontispiece to a manuscript dating from 1136



## FOOD AND DRINK



Coffee sellers in the Mahoney market in Tigrey, Ethiopia

# An Ethiopian invitation to dine

An ancient cuisine, unlike any other, arouses Nicholas Woodsworth's interest

Endale Teferra and I were ensconced on the terrace of the Academy Restaurant in the highland town of Harar. It sits on the main square no distance from the house where Haile Selassie, the last emperor of Ethiopia and descendant of the Queen of Sheba, spent his youth. In spite of this, the Academy is neither terribly regal nor academic.

The murals on its bright green walls – glasses of beer, plates of fruit and other symbols of idle indulgence – are shakily executed. The little wooden fence that fronts the terrace seems to have been crushed by a reversing truck. The waiters wear rubber flip-flops and jackets that might once, very long ago, have been white. None the less, with flowering bougainvillea for shade, with strong black coffee and lively talk for stimulation, it is a favourite place for townspeople to sit and watch life go by.

Teferra, as fond of stories as he is of eating, was telling me of the first time he invited a foreigner to his home for injera and wot, the national food of Ethiopia.

Wot is one of any number of kinds of spiced sauces, some mildly hot, others genuine three-bell, fire-ball alarm-raisers. Injera, made of grain, is the sponge-like, dingy-grey pancake of gigantic proportions that always accompanies it. Folded over several times to accommodate it at the table, injera does not look so much like

food as a bit of army blanket.

His guest was a French officer newly posted to the nearby port of Djibouti, and had never tried an Ethiopian meal before. As is the custom before eating, Teferra had brought him a water pitcher and poured it while his honoured friend washed his hands over an enamel basin. Another basin arrived containing what the poor man, alas, took to be a folded cloth. As he vigorously towelled away it was Teferra's delicate duty to explain that he was drying himself with the better part of dinner.

Such, in the past at least, has been the oddness and unfamiliarity of Ethiopian food. Isolated in their highland fastness for centuries, cut off from the world by geography and militant Islam, Ethiopians have developed a culture, and a cuisine, unlike any other. "Abyssinians slept a thousand years forgotten of the world by whom they were forgotten," wrote Edward Gibbon last century.

Things have changed. Gibbon would get a surprise if he made his way, to take one notable example, down 18th Street in Washington, DC, these days. If he were in a taxi, chances are his driver would be an Ethiopian – over recent decades, revolution, famine, civil war and refugee exodus have led to large numbers of Ethiopians settling in the west; half the taxi drivers in Washington now seem to be Ethiopian.

With them, Ethiopians have brought their food. 18th Street is

today lined with Ethiopian eating establishments – Fasika's Ethiopian Cuisine, Meskerem, the Red Sea Restaurant are just three at the top of a long list. Other cities in North America and Europe have their own collections: even Dallas, spiritual home of another red-hot speciality – chilli con carne – has its own Queen of Sheba Restaurant. Ethiopian food is catching on.

This does not mean that Ethiopian cooking is for everyone. Even toned down for western palates, most wots can make chilli con carne look like a low-torque bechamel. The heat of chilli peppers, as any aficionado of spicy food knows, is measured in Scoville units. In Ethiopia, as I discovered when Teferra and I wandered down to the basement kitchen of the Academy Restaurant, local cooking shatters the Scoville thermometer.

It was difficult to see exactly what was going on down there. The most Ethiopians, the chefs at the Academy use wood-fire to cook over. With flames and thick smoke pouring out of a primitive, cement-built cooker, good-humoured, elderly Hussein was going about his tasks with bloodshot and teary eyes. After a lifetime spent in chimneyless kitchens – windows or doors do the job instead – he told me that the real challenge of Ethiopian food was not its heat but its smoke.

I would have had to be entirely blind, however, not to have seen Hussein in action with his spices. He uses

them in industrial quantities, especially berbere, the classic, mixed-spice preparation that bubbles at the fiery heart of most Ethiopian dishes. Perhaps the best indication of the generous attitude Ethiopians bring to the use of berbere is to be found in *Exotic Ethiopian Cooking*, a cookbook published in the US by homesick expatriates. Although intended for family use, its basic berbere recipe – "use as needed", it advises – calls for 15lb of red chilli peppers, 5lb of fresh garlic, and 5lb of ginger roots. Additional ingredients, among them onions, rue seed, basil, cloves, cardamom, cinnamon and bishop's weed, are measured merely by the cup.

Why do Ethiopians like their food so hot, I asked Hussein, as he shoved dark red berbere powder into

slowly simmering sauces. He only laughed devilishly and threw in extra measures of garlic, ginger and cardamom.

Some people will tell you it kills bacteria and intestinal parasites. Others will swear it does wonders for sexual potency. No one seems, in fact, to have a sensible answer. But then, packing your stomach with gelignite is hardly a sensible option in the first place. Luckily, there exists another spicing technique, *aliche*, which although still highly flavoured, is turmeric rather than red-pepper based.

This being the 55-day-long fasting period before Easter – most Ethiopians are devout Christians – Hussein

was preparing fish and vegetable dishes for lunch. Lent is a good time to travel in Ethiopia, for at other times Ethiopians are voracious meat-eaters, and *saucy* of beef, chicken, lamb and goat (to say nothing of *kiffo*, raw meat mixed with serrano peppers) tend to dominate the menu.

Today, though, there was tender tilapia fish from nearby Lake Abaya, and berbere and *aliche wots* of lentils, kale, potatoes and split peas.

But whether it is meat, fish, or vegetables, the real secret of Ethiopian cooking lies in the marriage of two flavours – the fiery tastes of the wots and the slightly sour taste of the *injera*, achieved by fermenting the batter for a day or two before griddle-cooking it.

Strange as it all sounds, it goes down remarkably well, especially with a bottle or two of *tefi*, Ethiopia's fermented honey wine. Upstairs once again, I enjoyed lunch with Teferra – served on a low table between us, the wots sat in little piles on a great field of *injera* which, in effect, is plate, knife, fork and spoon all in one.

With Teferra working from one end and I from the other, we ripped off pieces of *injera*, wrapped them around morsels of food, sopped up the sauce with them, and popped them in our mouths. So much did I enjoy it that Teferra, whose wife, makes a great chicken and boiled-egg *wot*, invited me to a meal at his home.

I was honoured. And I promised not to wipe my hands on the *injera*.

Wine / Jancis Robinson

## Some affordable 95s



These investors anxious to part with thousands of pounds for the promise of a stake in the overheated 1995 market are apparently entirely impervious to the fact that they can often buy a fine, proven vintage of the 1980s of the very same wine for the same price and take it home and drink it tomorrow. "Drink the stuff!" Whatever we want to do that for," they say.

No, the 1995s I am buying are the ones I intend to pour down my own throat with the greatest of pleasure, not least because they cost a fraction of the price of the Eglise Clinet, Les Pins and first growths of this world.

The Madirams made in the Gascon south-west of France by the gifted Alain Brumont, spring to mind. He has already made some stunningly concentrated yet supple wines here, but he rates 1995 as his best vintage, and asks hardly more than £100 a case for his finest wine to date.

He makes Château Sous-casse, which I find a little rustic, but his pride and joy is Château Montus, both a superb regular bottling and a Cuvée Prestige for stashing away for many a year.

The 1990 Montus Cuvée Prestige is already dazzling – all dark red fruits and tightly sprung potential – but the 1995 counterpart will surely be even better.

Even such a fiercely partisan Gascon as Brumont has finally admitted that his local Tannat grape can be a little on the tough side and usually benefits from being blended with such a relative softie as Cabernet Sauvignon.

The splendid regular Ch Montus 1995 therefore contains about 20 per cent of Cabernet. But Tannat's abnormally high charge of tannins were so ripe in 1995 that he could not resist making his Cuvée Prestige 1995 from Tannat exclusively.

Ch Montus 1995 is available at about £85 a case in bond for the regular bottling and £110 for the prestige blend from La Vigneronsse of London SW7 (0171-599 6113) and H & H Fine Wines near Huntingdon (01480-411599). These are wines to pull out for one's grand children who ask: "Is it really true that there were once red grapes other than Cabernet and Merlot?"

And for similarly confounding the Chardonnay besotted world of the next millennium, I shall lay in substantial quantities of 1995 Mosel, Germany's

most favoured wine region last autumn. September, when many grapes in the rest of the country were ripened, was not particularly fine but, as in 1990, a sunny October brought the Mosel's late-ripening Riesling to a glorious conclusion on the best sites.

Acid levels are high, alcohol levels are low, but that is true in all Mosel wines. What distinguishes the good years is a combination of ripeness and extract, sheer concentration of flavour to play on the tongue with that soaring delicacy you can find virtually only here in the tortuous valley between Luxembourg and Koblenz.

The high extract of the 1995 Mosels is the result of almost uneconomically low yields, so prices have risen a little, but only the sweet rarities are bank breaking. Last year was exceptionally good for that refreshing nectar from frozen grapes, Eiswein. Grans Faslan's Goldkapsel version from Leiwien, for example, manages to combine the syrupiness of something that is essentially one-fifth pure sugar with the sky high acid level of 19 grammes a litre (the average dry wine has about 5 or 6).

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Vodka / Giles MacDonogh

## Poland's national tippie

The first sight of the Pole and his vodka is not always an edifying one. Polish railways certainly used to operate a policy aimed at eliminating drunkenness on trains by banning alcohol. Like all such high-minded measures, it was of only limited success.

As the train approached the German side of the Oder, Poles who had returned from a day's shopping scuttled around the carriage to find hiding-places for their vodka. Many appeared to conceal their hooch in old lemonade bottles to prevent detection. Then, as the train stopped at the first station across the Polish border, some character would get on and make his way down the corridor muttering "Pivo! Pivo!" in a stentorian whisper.

Beer, or "Pivo", has generally been my drink in Poland. Zwytyc and Okocim are nothing to write home about, but they are clean and refreshing. There is certainly potential for good beer from the less polluted areas in the south and east but the communist years have taken their toll in the traditional brewing areas of Silesia, and made the beer dull.

I once managed 10 days in Poland without even touching a glass of vodka. And then it came, not in a glass, mind you, but in a plastic cup. I was taking a bus from the small town of Olstyn in Masuria to the not much bigger one of Ostrolenka in Mazowia. I had settled in comfortably on the penultimate row of the bus and was looking forward to spending the journey gazing at the deep blue lakes, dunes and pine forests which are the joy of that part of the country.

Sadly, it was not to be. Almost as soon as the bus took off, I felt a tapping on my shoulder. I turned round to see a man with a blood-red face waving a bottle of vodka at me. I politely declined, stringing together a number of negatives which I thought to be Polish. He was not discouraged: the vodka now appeared in the cup, accompanied by a few pieces of chocolate. I accepted a little chocolate and took a minute sip from the cup.

I could see the situation going from bad to worse, but at the next stop I was saved by the arrival of a soldier in uniform. He immediately joined the group on the back seat. An argument swiftly developed, voices were raised, there was a fight, someone was sick. I never did have the time to take in the landscape: I was too busy holding my nose. I was considerably relieved when, nearly three hours later, the bus arrived in Ostrolenka.

Vodka has become a lifestyle drink, and the Poles are anxious to grab their share of the market. In the 1980s, it was "Stoly" from the Soviet Union which rang around the bars of New York and Seattle. Then there was Absolut, Swedish Brännvin. It was rechristened vodka and sales went through the roof. It became so popular that it even caught on in the CIS, and a friend who made frequent visits to Ukraine told me the *jeune dame* of Kiev never left home without it.

Vodka is white spirit, generally made from grain or potatoes. I say generally, because some of the western brands used to take a short cut and use molasses, making a drink which was more like ultra-refined rum. Vagueness about the definition of vodka and its origins, as well as Polish claims to having invented the spirit, led the ailing Soviet Union to commission William Pokhlebkin to write a *History of Vodka* (Verso 1992), which provides considerable food for thought.

Pokhlebkin determined that vodka production in Russia kicked off in the mid-16th century, a few years earlier than *gorzalsia* (the original Polish word), but then, that was all part of his brief. That would

place it slightly earlier than whisky production in Scotland, aquavit making in Scandinavia, or schnapps distillation in Germany. Only if you accept the Irish claim to have made whiskey in the dark ages does it appear that there is a country which has a longer history of spirits drinking than Russia.

At the beginning there was little difference between these drinks. Some were flavoured, others not. Later the Scots and the Irish learned the use of oak casks and their drinks developed another character which was half way to brandy. Vodka, *brännvin*, *brannwein*, *schnapps*, *gorzalsia* (whatever you choose to call it), was much of a muddle.

In the old days, most of it would have been made on the estates of the gentry. Its quality would have depended on the skill of the individual distillers and their ability to take out the "heart" of the distillate and throw back the foreshots and feints.

Some distilled two, three or four times to make a drink of high alcoholic strength, but it was not vodka as it is known today. The flavour of the raw materials would have been easier to identify: rye, maize, wheat, barley or potatoes.

Modern vodka is made from rectified alcohol, that is spirit which is more than 95 per cent pure, diluted with water. The process was almost impossible before the second quarter of the 19th century and the inven-

Modern vodka

is made from rectified alcohol, spirit more than 95 per cent pure, diluted with water

tion of the hyper-efficient, column still. What you had now was almost pure alcohol, the flavour of the grain was reduced to a bare nuance. By the time the column still appeared Poland was no more. It had ceased to exist at the Third Partition of 1795.

Rectified Polish vodka, therefore, dates from just after the first world war, when the country was recreated by the Treaty of Versailles. Large distilleries using column stills could now produce commercial brands to be retailed throughout the country. This is still true today. According to Elzbieta Goldyka, who makes the vodka at Zielona Gora (a town once better known for wine production) in Silesia, modern Poland has about 20 distilleries making up to 800 brands.

I tasted a few of these with Elzbieta Goldyka at the Polish Hearth Club in London recently. She insisted that you could still taste the raw materials despite the high degree of rectification: potato alcohol, for example, was sweeter than rye. I bow to her greater experience, but I am afraid I failed to detect anything more than a difference of alcoholic strength: like all the drinks which are now retailed under the name of vodka, neutrality of flavour seemed to be the highest virtue.

Of all the Polish vodkas I know, my favourite is Zubrowka (half-litre, £11.95, from Lea and Sandeman, 0171-376 4767 for branches and 0171-315 3730, which with its bison grass flavouring has a genuine, and thoroughly Polish, taste. I am probably wrong, however, how else could one explain the enduring popularity of the Polish national drink?

Oh, and a tip for anyone wishing to travel through Poland on a bus: sit at the front.

### Appetisers

Celebration of British Food and Drink, at its Flouxy club, London, until June 30.

Now is the time to buy Gramere gingerbread, an original Bakewell Pudding, Devonshire clover cream or Welsh smoked salmon.

For details of a special evening on Thursday, starting at 6.30pm, with tastings of regional specialities and English wines, (tickets £10, 55 redeemable

against purchases) ring Miranda Schofield on 0171-734 8040.

Take it From Here is the newly formed mail order division of Danmar International, importer of some of the best Italian produce. The range offered is small but these are top quality artisan products with the emphasis on natural, the sort of harder basics most health-conscious Italophiles always want to have on hand.

The list includes exquisite egg pastas by Spinosi (including the freeform squiggle shapes called *strascinati*, or priest's fingers), wholesome pastas made from durum wheat and ultra-chic farro (summer wheat), arborio rice, an Italian wild red rice, whole grains of farro, nutty Umbrian green lentils, polenta, "00" and other flours, balsamic and "slow trickle method" red wine

vinegars, olive oils from Liguria, Umbria, Abruzzo and Apulia. For details tel: 01784-477812; fax: 01784-477813.

Philippa Davenport

the motivating force behind Fatio in Casa, the catering company that offers a true taste of Apulia, has moved premises, and is already taking bookings for autumn and Christmas parties for private and corporate customers in the London area. For details contact her at: 636 Blackheath Road, London SE10 8DD. Tel and fax: 0181-691 5214.

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### Philippa Davenport has won a new award

instituted by the Guild of Food Writers. The guild decided earlier this year to give three awards annually in recognition of significant contributions to food writing or broadcasting in Great Britain. The results, based on votes by its members, were announced at its first annual awards ceremony earlier this month. The Book of the Year Award went to Anna Del Conte for *The Classic Food of Northern Italy* (Pavilion, £19.99).

The Jersey Round Award

for the most innovative work went to Lynda Brown for *The Modern Cook's Manual* (Michael Joseph, £16.99), and the Cookery Writer of the Year Award went to Davenport.

Also announced on this occasion was the winner of the Michael Smith Award, which went to Kit Chapman for his *Great British Chefs 2* (Mitchell Beazley, £19.99).

There is still time to catch Forthum & Mason's

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## TRAVEL

# Wild imaginings through China

Sarah Murray takes a train from Kunming to Hanoi

A clumsily orchestrated version of *Killing Me Softly* strains through antique speakers and into the cold concrete halls of Kunming's north terminal. It is an inauspicious start to a 30-hour train ride through China from Kunming to Hanoi, the Vietnamese capital - a journey that has only become possible since a recent warming of relations between the two long-standing enemies. The dusty structure is tiny by the standards of China's great railway hubs. At Shanghai or Guangzhou the mass of humanity that swarms buildings the size of aircraft hangars is overwhelming, but here a clutch of dishevelled travellers shuffles into a waiting room, little bigger than a village hall and lined with orange plastic chairs.

Grand aspirations are in evidence all the same. Two vast paintings dominate the hall, one at each end. The first depicts a landscape crowded with the bizarre and particularly Chinese limestone mountains that inhabit the parched scrolls of so many oriental watercolours. The second is of a fleet at sea - a strangely inappropriate image to find in Kunming, capital of Yunnan, a landlocked province in China's deep south-west.

But the passengers are not paying much attention to them. They are too busy tying up red plastic bags of oranges and bread bought for the journey and screwing down the

lids of jars containing what look like tiny snakes preserved in formaldehyde. These turn out to be large tea leaves that, topped up regularly with boiling water, provide a never-ending if bitter refreshment. The station attendant looks down her nose at my ticket and, without so much as glancing at me, points to the plastic chairs. Well, at least I am in the right place. The dry smoke

**Dozens of gorges and scores of tunnels later, we are in Hekou**

of Chinese cigarettes fills the air, sunflower seed husks crunch underfoot and a small child starts to cry.

Unlikely as it seems, this building is the beginning of an 18-hour journey that is to descend almost 2,000 metres from the Yunnan Plateau into the Red River basin. Across more than 400km of this wild landscape the train will make its way to the remote border with Vietnam. Although the Chinese train stops at Hekou, the border town, the line continues. From Lao Cai, on the Vietnamese side, another 12 hours takes passengers to Hanoi.

From Vietnam, French colonial ambitions stretched as far

as Yunnan in the early 20th century when thousands of workers hammered out the Haiphong-Kunming railway line. More than 3,000 tunnels were bored and 150 bridges built in this massive feat of engineering through which the French hoped to gain influence in China - the British were following the same tactic, but through Burma.

The railway never secured the French their hoped-for riches. They found in Yunnan not wealth, but a sparsely populated and poor province.

Connections between the two nations stretch back further than the French era, however. For several periods in its history, Vietnam was occupied by China and the Confucian culture and Taoist religion remain in place today. Rail links between the two countries were severed in 1979 after a brief border dispute.

Out on platform two of Kunming North Terminal, old ties are being reformed. Train attendants wearing ceremonial red silk banners marking the new rail link welcome the passengers. The display seems a little excessive since there are only 11 carriages to the train and no Vietnamese to be seen at all. Passengers clamber aboard and settle into their seats. We are all given a small white disc which miraculously turns into a face fan.

My carriage is a lively one. A sophisticated woman from Kunming (Indian cotton skirt, clean white shirt, fashionable sunglasses, patent leather



handbag) is joined by three ranchy girls from Guangxi province (jeans, tight T-shirts, white plastic slippers covered in mud) speaking their local dialect, and a couple from Hangzhou (cosy auntie-type in a hand-knitted jumper accompanied by bright-eyed niece).

Wild imaginings are what this journey is all about. The fact that it is possible at all has Asian power brokers dreaming of tapping the mineral wealth of Yunnan, while Chinese entrepreneurs fantasise about what to try with the profits made from trips to Vietnam to sell cheap underwear. Trade

between China and Vietnam is rising fast - it is expected to exceed \$1bn this year, double the 1995 figure, say Vietnamese officials. Direct rail links are certain to accelerate the process.

The woman from Kunming gets out a newspaper, the Guangxi girls slurp at their jars of tea, the auntie-type puts a new roll of film into the camera and, with a violent shutter, the train is off. Some 18 hours, dozens of astonishingly beautiful mountain gorges and scores of deep tunnels later, we are in Hekou, bleary-eyed and in need of something contain-



Restoring the link between two worlds: at Kunming's north terminal, a Chinese attendant decked with ceremonial red silk (above) welcomes passengers aboard a train bound for Hanoi. Rail connections between China and Vietnam - re-opened earlier this year amid official promises of increased trade between the two countries - have been closed since a brief war in 1979. Fastening along 24 hours later in a dilapidated train south of the border, northern Vietnam (left) appears poorer than its Chinese neighbour.

ing more caffeine than what's in those jam jars.

Hekou is a grim little nowhere town waking up with a jolt to the realities of global trade. Glass and steel banks offering multi-currency services rise up along a mud-soaked road. Glitzy hotels advertising fax services sit next to street markets where fried dumplings are dished out of a blackened wok into small pieces of newspaper. I did not actually see a man with a mobile phone riding in a rickshaw but I felt sure there was one around every corner. The best part is the border.

A small railway bridge forms the link between two of the world's last surviving communist powers. In the early morning drizzle Vietnamese women laden with vegetables stroll past young Chinese officials in ill-fitting uniforms. At the other end of the bridge are even younger-looking Vietnamese guards who clearly use the same tailor as their Chinese counterparts.

It is all rather quaint. Until you see the stream of giant trucks piled high with goods queuing up on the other side and realise that this is the start of something big.

Who is on the winning side of the new relationship becomes clear as the train steams towards Hanoi through an unbearably picturesque landscape where the sun beats down on figures bent double in green rice paddies. It may be pretty but it is visibly poorer than north of the border.

China's industrial might is bearing down on Vietnam. The streets of Hanoi bulge with Chinese food, textiles and porcelain. But after centuries of suspicion and hostility, both countries hope the railway will bring a new era of prosperity for all involved.

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## HOW TO SPEND IT



From left (top): Rock band Oasis line up on scooters - a sure sign that two-wheelers are a popular way of getting around again. And, the way we were: Actor Alfred Marks takes to the road on a Vespa in 1955. From left (below), a Typhoon 50 - its sport styling has proved very popular. And typical scenes from the 1950s when scooters became an essential mode of transport.

Historical photographs: Hulton Deutsch  
Oasis photograph: Retna pictures

## Scooter commutes to designer comeback

Forget those slabby old Vespas and Lambrettas, writes Peter Knight. The new generation is a hot item that can see off the kami kaze cowboys

Virility cannot be measured by engine size alone. I do not deliver pizzas. My other bike's a Ducati Monster.

These are just some of the possible bumper stickers that could boost confidence when jostling for position at the traffic lights with kami kaze motorcycle couriers while poised on your 50cc two-tone, future-retro styled Velocifero scooter with an engine note like a mad mosquito.

Perceived threats to your masculinity quickly evaporate as you scoot off ahead of some of the bigger bikes (acceleration is surprisingly rapid), park in spaces small enough for a bicycle, commute at a cost less than taking a bus, and get to your destination quicker than virtually any other form of transport.

Scooters are hot again. Forget the slabby lines of the old Vespas and Lambrettas that Uncle Kevin used to ride. The new scooters have been restyled and re-engineered to please city commuters who want practicality with panache. And the hottest scooter for the design conscious is the Velocifero from Italjet, which looks like a Vespa on Ecstasy and comes in a wide selection of two-tone paint jobs.

The extraordinary thing about the Velocifero is that for around £1,700 investment you

get more attention than on a £12,000 Harley Davidson," says scooter commuter Martin Wilding, creative director of Black Cat, an advertising company in Richmond, Surrey. His other bike is a Philippe Starck-designed Aprilia Moto 8.5. The Velocifero is getting all the attention. Oasis, the rock band, ride them. And television presenter Jonathan Ross has ordered two of a special edition model, customised by shoe designer Patrick Cox in two-tone black and white with a snake-skin seat: one for Jonathan, one for his wife.

Scooters have always sold well in Italy, their spiritual home, where around 250,000 were bought last year. British sales in 1995 were just 6,292, as buyers have been put off by the Mod-tinged image. But this summer promises record sales for scooters everywhere as crowded streets and pollution change attitudes.

Piaggio, the Italian scooter giant, still sells the classic Vespa models - now 50 years old - as well as a range of modern scooters. Most notable is the sports-styled Typhoon, a bullet-shaped, fat-wheeled model which comes in three different engine sizes: 50cc, 80cc and 125cc.

Europeans bought 82,000 of the 50cc Typhoon model last year, underlining the popularity of the sports styling. Judicious use of moulded plastic and brighter colours, combined

with motorcycle style suspension and brakes, has produced a scooter that looks more macho than its predecessors. They also hold the road better. Automatic starters and gearboxes make them easier to ride. Press the starter button, twist the throttle and go. And quickly, too.

Italjet has taken the sports design to the extreme, maybe even a little too far. Their Formula 50 model looks like a diminutive Ducati with boy-racer Italian styling. Handling

with smaller manufacturers, such as Italjet, beginning to sell well.

"The scooter has had a resurgence which the moped has not. This has been almost exclusively due to design," says Richard Seymour of Seymour Powell, a design consultancy.

Seymour Powell has helped drag the former East German manufacturer, MZ, out of the Soviet dark ages with an award-winning design for its Skorpion model. The company is also helping an Indian/Japanese consortium design a scooter for the Indian market, where the emphasis is on durable practicality rather than sportiness.

In the trade, Scooters are known as "step-throughs", which means that you can mount the bike simply by stepping through it, rather than having to swing a leg over it. This has obvious benefits for riders who wear skirts or value the stitching on their Armani suits.

Scooters originally offered huge benefits over conventional motorcycles by protecting riders' legs from the rain and hiding oily engines under the body. There were also compartments in which to carry things. As with motorcycles, however, their popularity declined in the 1980s with the introduction of cheap, small cars like the Mini and Fiat 500. Now, as congestion reaches

Roman levels in many parts of Europe, the scooter looks set for a brighter future.

This is because of a growing need for a low-cost, low-emission, highly efficient and practical means of city transport. Planners are also beginning to see the benefits of two wheels rather than four, and some allow motorcycles and bicycles to use bus lanes.

Such a change in official attitude might go some way to eradicating the unfortunate image of two-wheelers as the

pariahs of the road. If not, the sheer practicality of scooters surely will.

"I've got three scooters and I love them. I can get to a meeting virtually anywhere in central London in 10 minutes wearing my suit. I park easily and I put the helmet under the seat," says Jack Gratton, managing director of Major Players, a recruitment agency based in Chelsea.

"I bought them mainly because I was fed up with traffic jams. I spend about £3 a

week on petrol and it saves me a fortune in cabs," he says. He has a number of other bikes as well, including a Ducati.

"I still get the same thrill riding the scooter as I do the other bikes. I'm a complete convert," Gratton says.

Neil Brown, joint owner of the Highly Sprung and Recline and Sprawl sofa shops in London, uses a scooter to visit his stores. "It's opened up a lot of London for me. You can go virtually as the crow flies," he says.

Scooter-makers clearly want to exploit the need for inexpensive city-friendly bikes and are working hard to overcome some of the market's resistance by reshaping the image. Part of this is reflected in the "sports" styling, but as Seymour points out, this is merely a step sideways in the evolution of the scooter.

The future could be electric. Piaggio has produced the ultimate environmentally sound model, the curiously named Zip & Zip. Only available in Italy, it has two engines - one a 50cc two-stroke with catalytic converter, the other an electric motor.

Riders can switch from one to the other, allowing them to enter traffic zones where the internal combustion engine is banned. It gives up to 25km on a single charge and you just plug it into the mains to recharge.

My other bike's definitely going to be a Zip & Zip.



Just plug it in: Zip & Zip by Piaggio

Planners are finally beginning to see the benefits of two wheels rather than four

is surprisingly bike-like, with advanced suspension giving exhilarating cornering and disc brakes enabling a quick stop. The 16-year-olds will love it.

Piaggio's UK sales rose 28 per cent in 1995 and it now holds 23 per cent of the UK market for 50cc scooters. The rest is shared by a number of manufacturers - Honda, Yamaha, Suzuki and Peugeot -

## If it's light and airy, it's all the rage

The Contemporary Applied Arts has moved into a beautiful new, light and airy building - at last a home that matches up to the quality of the objects on show.

For anybody who has not yet discovered this wonderful source of fine contemporary crafts, it is worth making the journey to London's Percy Street to see what is on offer. There is glass and jewellery, wall-hangings and sculpture, ceramics ranging from the fine to the rough and rustic - all of which might make better presents than the standard merchandise that fills most stores.

Those who like ceramics should make a point of going between now and July 20 when an exhibition, Soft Clay, shows the work of six potters - from the refined and sensi-

tive pots of Edmund de Waal (some of which are photographed here) to the amorphic, more robust wares of Joanna Constantinides and the delicious pieces by the Japanese



Pot, £150, by Edmund de Waal

ceramicist Aki Moriuchi. Edmund de Waal's pieces start at £25 and go up to £400 with those photographed here costing £184, £142 and £110 for the jar with the lid.



Edmund de Waal's jar

Sandy Brown's wares range from £34.50 to £290 and the strongly glazed pot at £150. Specially desirable, too, are Aki Moriuchi's little creamware jugs at £67. Contemporary Applied Arts is at 2 Percy Street, London, W1.

In the early days they sold for remarkably low prices (about £2-£3 a metre, I seem to recall) but prices have gone up, with a metre of fabric costing an average of £11.50. But there is still butter muslin at £1.85 a metre, Egyptian cotton

at £3, natural repp at £6.80 and curtain linen union at £6.50.

While the original shop is still at Regents Park Road, there is a newer one at 271 Wandsworth Bridge Road, London, SW6. Mankin has also just launched a mail order catalogue so that anybody from anywhere in the UK can order the fabrics simply and easily.

The colour photography is astonishingly realistic showing colour, texture and weave, so ordering from the catalogue could not be simpler.

It is still, however, worth visiting the shops in person for although the catalogue lists some of the most popular fabrics in the range, it cannot show them all. The shops stock around 300 different natural fabrics, most of them

either hand-woven in India or made in old-established English mills.

For a copy of the catalogue, send stamps to the value of £2 to Ian Mankin, 109 Regents Park Road, London, NW1 6UR.

Lucia van der Post

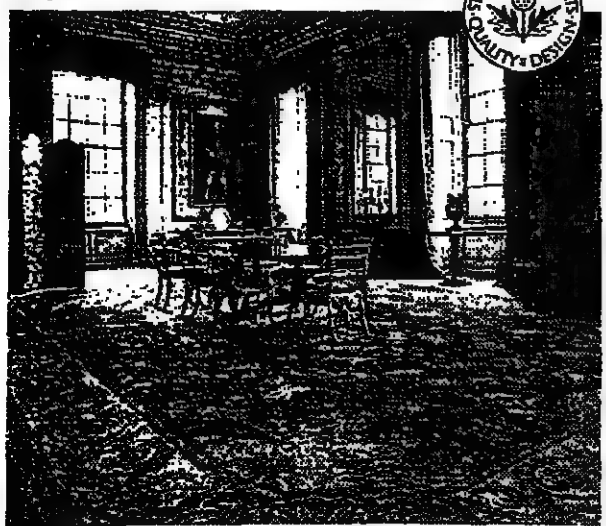
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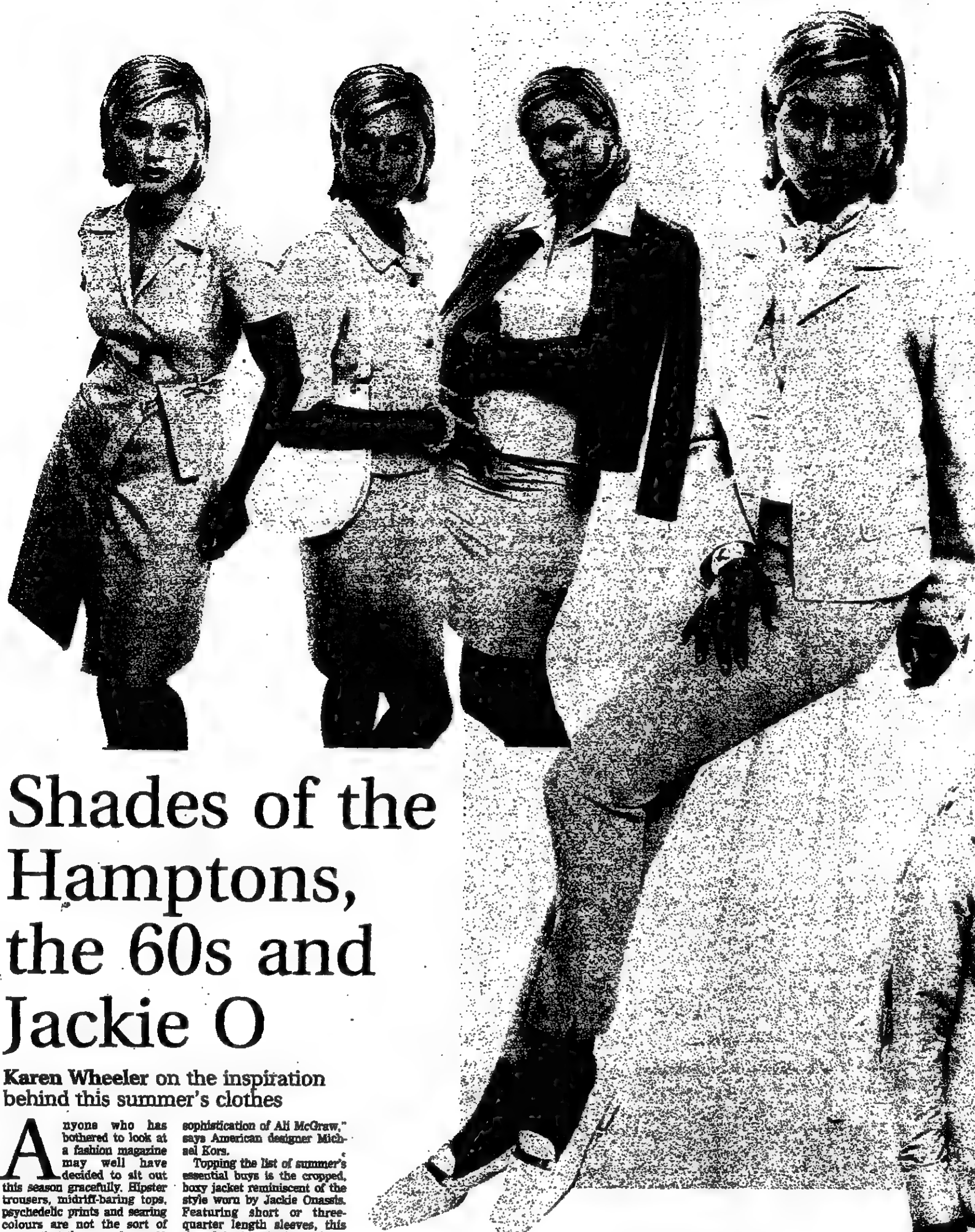
Shades  
Hamp  
the 60s  
Jackie C

Karen Wilson  
behind

A



## FASHION



□ From left: Lilac silk shantung shirt dress, £240, by MaxMara, 32 Sloane Street, London, SW1, (stockist inquiries: 0171-287 3434).

□ Pink short-sleeved, linen mix jacket £99.95 and A-line skirt, £46, by Jigsaw (stockist inquiries: 0181-678 8443). White pearlised leather shoulder bag, £285, by Armando Pollini, 35 Brook Street, London, W1 (0171-629 7606). Silver link bracelet, £225, by Cox and Power, 85 Walton Street, London, SW3 (0171-288 5335).

□ Green linen mix pencil skirt, £35, and green/white gingham check cotton shirt, £49.95, by the Liberty Collection, Liberty, Regent Street, London, W1 (0171-734 1234). Lilac suede fly front jacket, £568, by John Rocha (stockist inquiries: 0171-734 0123).

□ Green linen mix, boxy jacket £299, tapered trousers £179 and lime linen shell top, £129, by Nicole Fahri, 158 New Bond Street, W1 (stockist inquiries: 0171-287 8787). Multi-coloured, chiffon scarf, £12.95, by Laura Ashley (stockist inquiries: 01686-622116). White square-toed loafers, £135, by Armando Pollini, 35 Brook Street, London, W1 (0171-629 7606). Silver cuff, £420, by Van Peterson, 194-196 Walton Street, London, SW3 (0171-584 1101).

□ Gold shantung silk fitted shirt, £189, and chocolate shantung side zip pants, £229, by Uberta Camerini at Joseph, 23 Old Bond Street (stockist inquiries: 0171-629 4774). Cream sleeveless shell top, £19.99, from Next (stockist inquiries: 0162-848424). Multi-coloured long chiffon scarf, £12.95, by Laura Ashley (as above).

□ Floral sundress in pure cotton, £175, by Votre Nom (stockist inquiries: 0171-584 7999). Lilac cashmere cardigan, £295, by Ballantyne (stockist inquiries: 0171-734 2861). Silver necklaces, £280, by Van Peterson (as above).

Photographer: Roger Charity  
Styling: Karen Wheeler  
Assistant: Louise Sykes  
Make-up: Almee Adams  
Hair: Esther Chandler for Paul Mathew

## Shades of the Hamptons, the 60s and Jackie O

Karen Wheeler on the inspiration behind this summer's clothes

Anyone who has bothered to look at a fashion magazine may well have decided to sit out this season gracefully. Hipster trousers, midriff-baring tops, psychedelic prints and searing colours are not the sort of trends that those aged over 30 can view with equanimity. Styles such as the shirtwaister dress can look unappealingly frumpy.

It is without doubt a "difficult" season. But in spite of the disconcerting messages from the catwalks, there are plenty of desirable clothes in the shops.

The trick for those who still want to look fashionable is to substitute wearer-friendly alternatives for the more formidable trends: slim capri pants instead of hipsters; shell tops or fitted skirts instead of halter necks; mid-tone pastels instead of acid brights.

In this way - and by choosing simple, modern shapes - it is possible to assemble a summer wardrobe which will both brighten up an urban setting and work well on holiday. The overall look is ladylike yet sporty with more than a hint of the 1950s and 1960s. "Think relaxed" American sportswear; clothes which are easy, yet polished. Think Malibu, Palm Beach and East Hampton; and the sporty

sophistication of Ali McGraw," says American designer Michael Kors.

Topping the list of summer's essential buys is the cropped, boxy jacket reminiscent of the style worn by Jackie Onassis. Featuring short or three-quarter length sleeves, this should be bought in conjunction with a sleeveless shift (good for smart summer functions), slim trousers or a narrow skirt. Cropped hip-length jackets with slim capri pants (as in the Nicole Fahri style) are fabulously flattering if you have thin thighs and a trim bottom. Otherwise opt for a longer, belted safari jacket.

Also fashionable is the understated skirt and top. The straight, slim, knee-length skirt is a more feasible alternative to the flesh-baring, low slung A-line skirt that featured on many catwalks. This comes in a wide array of fabrics but high-tech, synthetics give it modernity. It can be worn conventionally with a jacket or with a shirt simply tucked into the waistband for a fashionably fuss-free look. The shell - a sleeveless, button-up-the-back top - is another item this season, either on its own or under a jacket.

A pair of slim capri pants (of the type popular in Palm Beach and East Hampton in the 1960s) is also high on the list of fashionable but wear-

friendly items. With the addition of Lycra - and the right top - these can be surprisingly easy to wear. They can be back or side zipped and made from anything from cotton pique to silk shantung. Whites will be useful while sand, shell pink, cornflower blue or pistachio are all popular shades.

The key to wearing capri pants successfully is to choose carefully what you wear with them. Fitted shirts (another essential summer buy), shell tops and twinsties look good on those with slim figures but a more modern - and easy-to-wear - alternative is the tunic top.

At MaxMara thigh-length tunics with matching capri pants have been hugely successful - particularly his include a cream, finely knitted cotton tunic with a hipster belt (£285) and a thigh-length tunic with short sleeves and a mandarin collar in bright orange shantung silk (£298). "These two styles have been best-

sellers because they combine three of summer's strongest trends in one: shantung silk, bright orange and the tunic shape," reports MaxMara.

The template for many of the styles is the ankle-slit, silk shantung, side-zipped trouser

**The one utterly indispensable item is a luxurious cardigan**

that Prada did last summer. This has now been reinterpreted by everyone from MaxMara to Marks and Spencer.

M&S and Next have done accessibly priced versions in polyester rather than silk shantung - even to the trained eye it is virtually impossible to tell the difference. Other good

buys include Nicole Fahri's bluebell-coloured, side-zipped cotton trousers and Laura Ashley's powder blue capri pants in a linen-mix (£49.95) and matching cropped jacket (£80).

And so to the shirt dress. Advocated by just about every designer and strongly featured in magazines, there seems to be no escaping it this summer.

It can look stunningly simple and chic but also terrible if not chosen carefully. While silk dupion is considered the most fashionable fabric, a button-through-to-the-hem dress in fluid matte jersey that gently drapes over the body can also be flattering. Stiff, starched looking shirtwaisters are being worn with irony by the young and trendy but look ageing and humorless on anyone aged over 20.

Designers would also have you believe that no wardrobe is complete without at least one vividly patterned item this summer. "Bad taste" prints - 1970s graphics, wallpaper and

soft furnishings prints - are the really big thing, but the more feasible alternative is to opt for one of the widely available pretty floral prints.

The prints range from small Liberty-esque florals to bigger, splashier designs. A floral shirt can go a long way to livening up a summer wardrobe but there are also some charming little sundresses - like the style featured by Votre Nom.

Given the preponderance of sleeveless shirt dresses, shell tops and shirts being worn in place of jackets, the one utterly indispensable item is a luxurious, nicely coloured cardigan.

The chic way to wear it is over the shoulders with one

button fastened. In cashmere, there is nothing more comforting if you are shivering in a chilly air-conditioned office, an airport lounge or attending an outdoor function.

Choosing a cardigan in a sherbert colour is also a good way of adding colour to your wardrobe: after all, this is not a season to blend into the background in beige.

The right shoes and bag make all the difference as to whether or not an outfit works. A pair of flat shoes (loafers, thong sandals or ballet pumps) is essential to go with trousers and capri pants while low-heeled "kitten" heel slingbacks look chic with skirts and dresses.

Consider also buying a pair of white loafers: you probably thought it would never happen but white shoes are chic. Prada's "identity" loafer (featuring a silver band across the front) has already sold out but Armando Pollini has an excellent version in soft calfskin. Flesh or ecru colour shoes can also look stunning against bare, suntanned ankles and serve to elongate the leg.

As for bags, the only style to carry - and this holds true for autumn and beyond - is the practical "milk" shoulder bag which replaces last summer's hand-held frame bag.

This bag is big enough to carry an organiser and a mobile phone but not so big as to render you with a shoulder injury. Russell & Bromley, Prada and Gucci are good hunting grounds while Jigsaw has the perfect chain store version, available in black (but not white) leather at £99.

Finally, if you opt for only one accessory this summer, make it a colourful scarf, worn any way you like but ideally around the neck.

## Craftsmen dig in their heels

Damian Foxe reports on the art of bespoke shoemaking in London

In 1946, London's West End Master Bootmakers' Association registered 30 members, based around St James's, Mayfair and Piccadilly. Fifty years later, this figure has dropped to five.

At this rate, you might think that British bespoke shoemaking will soon be extinct. But you would be wrong.

These last five members already have orders which will keep them in business for at least the next 15 years. Demand for hand-made shoes is on the increase, and young artisans are once again eager to master the craft. The shoe industry is digging in its heels.

"British people who can afford bespoke shoes, have a duty to the craft to have shoes made," says Madeleine Fry, manager of Henry Maxwell &

Co, established in 1750. "I have been in the business for two years and already I am evangelist about it," she says.

"Our shoes last up to 40 years. We use quality materials which cost a fortune and are difficult to obtain. Customers are making a financial investment over time."

With prices ranging from £800 to more than £2,000 a pair, it is important to know what you are getting for your money. In the world of bespoke shoes, the term shoemaker remains a misnomer. The process involves as many as seven individually spe-

cialised craftsmen. It takes up to four months to create a finished pair.

"Each stage of the process takes between three and five years to learn," says George Glasgow, co-owner of George Cleverly & Co.

"Our makers can tell you the exact number of stitches to the inch needed to give maximum strength to the union of sole and upper on any particular shoe," says John Lobb, owner of John Lobb Bootmakers, founded in 1869.

The British bespoke shoe business is at a turning point. Significant investment in

training and strategic marketing initiatives are necessary if its future is to be secure. "It takes a great effort to keep traditions going," says Lobb.

"Over the past 30 years we have made a concerted effort to train new craftspeople who are keen to learn the craft."

Cardinals, Britain's foremost college for shoe making and design, has recently introduced a new bespoke course. "They had always been manufacturing oriented," says Jason Amesbury, who recently established his own business after 10 years at Lobb.

"Now they are recognising

that they have to market themselves properly and persuade a new audience of the advantages of the hand-made."

Fry is even more progressive. "I'm the new girl in town, so I can look at things in a different way." Constantly introducing new ideas, she is redeveloping the ghillie, a traditional Scottish shoe, worn with a kilt. "I want to have them lived in family tartans," she explains.

"If you can afford to have a registered tartan, then you should consider investing in ghillie shoes which display it beautifully."

Co-operation between indi-

vidual shops is next on her agenda. "We could get greater discounts if we stood together as a unified force," says Fry.

Amesbury agrees and adds: "Cutting out middlemen and keeping prices down would be great."

He is targeting a younger market to expand his client base. "Younger clients want contemporary styles, so now I get more interesting commissions. People are suddenly becoming aware of what bespoke has to offer. As soon as they understand the specialised techniques which are involved in making bespoke

shoes, they see them as a good investment."

Lobb is more reflective: "If we do our job properly then the shoes which we make will always be worth buying."

In his impressive wooden panelled showrooms, hangs a shadowy oil painting entitled "The Seven Ages", each age signified by a pair of shoes. This is a testament to one life, then Lobb's basement - its catacombed shelves spilling over with 20,000 lasts - is the story of an age.

■ Henry Maxwell & Co, 29 South Audley Street, W1. Tel: 0171-495 8511.

■ Cleverly, 12 The Royal Arcade, 28 Old Bond Street, W1. 0171-493 0443.

■ John Lobb, 9 St James Street, SW1, 0171-930 3654.

■ Jason Amesbury, 33 Elder Street, E1. 0171-377 2005.





## GARDENING

# A brilliant foil to the green effect

Robin Lane Fox breaks the colour code with single vibrant blooms

Gardens are still running wonderfully late in England. Like a good programme which is going into extra time, the vibrancy of mid-May is only just out of flower and once again the season has played marvellous havoc with people who plan too carefully for exact colour combinations.

Odd things are coming out together, a relief for those of us who have never sat down and thought through the implications of every colour combination in our gardens. The best effects happen by accident and then we pretend that we foresaw them in our wisdom.

One effect, however, occurs every year and is seldom given the necessary attention. The first fortnight of June is still overpowered by green, except in a freak year like 1985. Many gardeners fuss over white or orange flowers but never consider what a strong colour a young green is in their design.

Those whose gardens have had boundaries are particularly prone to the problem. Until mid-May, the edges of the garden are transparent hedges and trees out of leaf. Then, brilliant green opens in a rush. At first, it is merciful in hiding the neighbours. After a week of relief, it starts to overpower the spring gardens going past their best. Multi-coloured tulips are fading and nothing has taken over in borders which are also mounds of greenery.

I like to play with this problem because it is well solved by ignoring the usual advice on planting. Most of the handbooks, even the Royal Horticultural Society dictionaries, will tell beginners to plant herbaceous plants in groups of five or more. Often, they will also tell them to confine their trises to special beds where they can be lifted, divided and perhaps even weeded if you have the energy for a difficult task.

This late season has persuaded me that we often do better to disobey the rules and proceed on the opposite principle. Dictionaries are not often interested in serious visual problems like strength of fresh green colouring. One way to combat it is to distribute individual plants with brilliant colours wherever it is most monotonous and to counter nature's own brilliance with an equally brilliant transplant of your own.

The ideal candidate is a plant which some eyes dismiss as awkward. Poppies have a reputation for leaving holes and gaps and being too much of a good thing. In fact, they are heaven sent at this season if you use them as individuals rather than as a group.

I have learned to dot some of the brightest forms round the garden, especially where the natural green is particularly brilliant. Vibrant red and young greenery go superbly together and it takes no more than a plant or two at intervals

to lead the eye on and remind you that you are looking at something more than a hectic forest of green.

In the east Mediterranean, nature plays the same trick more spectacularly whenever red tulips grow wild in young grass or the superb anemones burst out on the green hillsides of Syria.

We cannot be so extravagant in England, but poppies here and there make a huge difference. By early July, they will have died back and other mounds of greenery will have hidden the individual absentee. Poppies put down long roots which are well able to cope with the expanding claims of late-flowering neighbours.

The choice of colours seems to get better and better every year. Subtle eyes seem to be entranced by a deep plum coloured variety which emerged in Somerset. Known as Paddy Plum, it costs up to \$4 a plant but those who have it think it

good value and it is probably one for smaller gardens which require only the most exotic examples in a small space.

I prefer the traditional scarlet to dark red range, set off by one or two scattered plants of the wonderful Perry's White. Six years ago, a nurseryman sent me three plants of a brilliant poppy called Allegro by mistake. Curses flew but I had to use them somewhere and by dotting them down beds which are otherwise far too green in early June, I have ended up with an enviable accident.

Their huge scarlet flowers would be too much in a group but they transform a week in a border but so long as you choose the strongest varieties with sufficient height to the stem, you can enjoy an iris impact round the garden without being stuck with a drab iris bed out of season. The tall yellow Starshine is amazingly robust, as is the pure white White City. Both need to be staked to show to the best advantage. I dislike staking so early and I recommend the



Monet's 'Wild Poppies' now in the Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Bridgman Art Library

purple and white velvety Wabash as an alternative. Its flowers are not so heavy and they have a brilliance which stands out among any emerging clumps of daisy.

I have to say that I think the French were probably better with these plants than many of us are nowadays. Poppies and irises were high points in those gardens which we can recover from written descriptions in that elusive golden age from 1880 to 1910. An early display suited their hotter and more

difficult climate but these two brilliant contrasts with green summer delighted the great artist gardeners. Irises are still a mainstay in the version of Monet's garden which the crowds flock to see at Giverny.

Monet also admired poppies whose oriental forms, the brightest for our borders, made a significant impact in the 1890s. One of their great magpies was Monet's fellow painter and gardening colleague, Gauguin. Visitors to his garden,

now lost to us, commented on the particular array of poppies which he had built up. Artists' eyes do sometimes pick on mainstays which quieter gardeners tend to underplay.

There are no poppies, sadly, in the exhibition of Gauguin's paintings at the Royal Academy. He loved poppies, none the less, and he is much in my mind as I look at their impact, so strong in a year which has held up the young greens and made them so dominant for so long.

## Is it muck or is it magic?

Everyone, sometime or other, must experience an event that brings home to them the horrors of modern living. For me, it was while working very grudgingly, in our new garden, which my wife wanted to turn organic. I was heaving out the weeds when, over the fence and across the river, a light aircraft was spraying a field of peas. How I would have liked to have done the same to my extensive crop of nettles, bindweed, dock and ground elder.

At that moment, a swallow that had been chasing insects above me fell dead at my feet, and I then saw the aircraft do a victory wobble and fly off for its next load of poison.

I was converted, and I have been a willing organic gardener since. I began to read some of my wife's Henry Doubleday booklets. We even gave up a precious day of one of our holidays to go to Ryton Gardens and see the "muck and magic" people at work - composting comfrey, growing green manure, mulching with carpets and black polythene, re-inventing the old environmentally friendly ways of coping with pests and diseases.

From Ryton I got the idea of the carrot cage. The carrot fly flies just above ground level and will go round, rather than up and over, to look for a place to lay its eggs. Solution: build a mesh barrier 2ft high around your carrot patch.

Other pests are not so easily beaten. In truly "muck and magic" style, I once imported a load of farmyard manure. With it, however, came some tiny, hard-shelled boring things that set about potatoes in early June. I gave up growing spuds until, during a craze for laying black polythene over empty spaces to keep weeds down, I hit on the wizard wheeze of excavating an area, lining it with polythene and filling the crater with earth from under the bonfire, where nourishing plant fodder had accumulated over 15 years. Sweet was success. But whitefly in brassica I could not defeat.

Fortunately, Brussels sprouts are not popular, and these were home to most of the beasts, so we stopped growing them. We can grow calabrese and broccoli without too many of the pests taking up residence, so long as we rotate the crops each year.

My mind and will are now attuned to doing things the natural way, and it makes gardening a lot easier by taking the worry out of the work. If you are happy to let your lawn become a piece of land where grass predominates but where Persian speedwell, daisies, white clover, lady's bedstraw, nipplewort, dandelion, hawkbit and birds foot trefoil are not destroyed by poison, immense pleasure is added to your enjoyment of it and you are not forever having to fork out on lawn conditioners

and selective weedkillers.

I have also become more tolerant of wildlife. When I see our resident cock pheasant eating the young brassica I simply remind myself that they need netting. At one time I used a shotgun and an air rifle to keep down the many wood pigeons that roost and nest in our old ash trees. We used to eat them but when my family became largely vegetarian, I felt guilty about the dead birds and sold my guns.

Being the sort of person who likes (or rather likes) to be in control, the idea of creatures marauding in my garden did not appeal. I still cannot forgive blackbirds and starlings for eating our cherries or grey squirrels for stealing our cobnuts and walnuts nor do I like rats much. However, I can tolerate the garden mice that inhabit our compost heaps as they help to distract my neighbour's cats from the moorhens on the pond.

I can now sit and watch wood pigeons grazing the clover in the lawn or starlings razoring for leather jackets. I no longer worry about garden pests: aphids are consumed by ladybirds and hover flies, midges by flycatchers, swallows and martins. Contrary to the general trend, we have our colony of song thrushes that live on the plentiful supply of unadulterated slugs, shared with frogs and toads.

We have thickets of briars, eglantine, cow parsley and nettles where the wrens, warblers, tits and finches thrive and butterflies breed. We have a dozen ivy-clad dead elms interspersed with holly, hawthorn, maple and wild plum - a veritable ladder and home for creatures that like to live in such places. And the enormous bonus to me is that it more or less looks after itself.

If you leave well alone, you can enjoy the weeds as much as the plants you have put in yourself. Has earth anything more wonderful to show than a large patch of dandelions in a herb garden or a blue film of speedwell in your new spring grass? One summer my favourite was a huge hairy ox tongue that grew at the top of the terrace steps; that was the year after the first burdock established itself among the blackberries, and teazles began to grow in a bed of hardy geraniums.

So my philosophy is if a plant cannot cope with a disease, it dies and we replace it with something harder. My pride at one time were my spallered peaches; they now get leaf-curl in the spring but still produce an edible, albeit smaller, crop.

Enjoying what nature provides has been the principal gain in organic gardening - and a great reward for not poisoning the land.

Roy Barnes



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# Residential Property

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

## Suddenly, London Docklands is chic

Anne Spackman looks at what is coming on to the market east of Tower Bridge

State agents in Docklands still get calls from prospective buyers offering to take recession casualties off their hands. Where, the agents wonder, have these people been for the past three years? In Docklands, the biggest problem is the lack of property for sale. If you want a two-bedroom flat in a good location, you will probably have a choice of about six.

However, the lack of supply is being swiftly addressed. Figures from Savills Research show that more than 7,000 new properties are due to come on to the market in central London over the next four years and 70 per cent of them are in Docklands. Given that 70 per cent of the demand in central London is not in the area east of Tower Bridge, there is a danger that the tables of supply and demand will turn too quickly.

Those who know the area say it is no longer helpful to talk about a single Docklands market. It is like talking about west London as a single entity. The area has matured sufficiently to have defined parts - Butler's Wharf and St Katherine's Dock, Wapping and Limehouse, Rotherhithe, Surrey Quays and the Isle of Dogs.

The smartest areas are those closest to Tower Bridge on both sides of the river, with the north bank areas of Wapping and Limehouse coming next. It is in these areas that two-thirds of the new developments are going up. The agents say these are exactly the kinds of properties which buyers want and cannot find. They have no difficulty selling quality houses in good locations: their worries are about 1,500 flats at the lower end of the market.

This shift upmarket represents a significant change in Docklands. Two years ago, the area sold primarily on price. You could get more there for your money than anywhere else in central London. As a result, many buyers were investors rather than owner-occupiers. One of the most successful developments was Barrett's 306-home project at Sovereign View on the river front at Rotherhithe. Barrett sold three-bedroom townhouses with garages, directly fronting the river, for less than £180,000 - the best value in town.

Now, growing numbers are deciding they would like to live in the area even



The bright lights of east London: Canary Wharf, Docklands Light Railway and the surrounding area

though they could afford to live elsewhere. Their choice may be between a two-bedroom conversion in lively, but traffic-bound Fulham and a riverside apartment on the water, with parking, but lacking shops and bars. More people are heading east. It is these buyers who have changed the property equation in Docklands.

With so few secondhand homes coming to the market, people are being forced to buy off-plan from among eight or so new developments. They want warehouse conversions or distinctive, modern blocks,

high-quality fittings, a view of water, good transport links and, of course, parking.

The most expensive site is Taylor Woodrow's development at City Quay in St Katherine's Dock, where prices are reaching £225 a square foot. Of 50 apartments, 21 are sold, including five of the six penthouses - and the building has yet to come out of the ground.

Across the river, Hempstead Homes is converting two warehouses just south of Tower Bridge into 109 apartments, with prices around £175 a square foot. Months

before completion, the Boss House development is already half sold, entirely to English owner-occupiers. The same picture emerges at Jacob's Island, a Berkeley Homes development, a few minutes walk from Butler's Wharf. The main riverside block of 19 apartments, costing from £295,000, has been sold off-plan.

In Limehouse, buyers are paying £325 a square foot for the large, three-bedroom flats with metal decks at the front of Balymore Homes' architecturally striking Dundas Wharf. The 188-apartment develop-

ment has views up and down the river.

With so many developments, buyers have to watch they are not heading for a life on a building site. Any undeveloped, or even badly developed, land is a potential site - particularly in Limehouse.

In Butler's Wharf, an outline plan for development of the 11-acre Butler's Wharf estate has been submitted by Frogmore. It includes around 750 homes, double the number already there. More immediately, the Jubilee Line extension is under construction, due for completion in 1998. Buyers

will feel the work on the line is a pain worth suffering in the short-term. Agents feel its impact is still seriously underestimated. Tom Marshall of Cluttons, who, with Savills, are the most active agents in this market, thinks three areas will benefit most from the Jubilee extension - Butler's Wharf, those parts of Rotherhithe within 10 minutes walk of the Canada Water stop and north Bermondsey, an area very like Islington 20 years ago. Cluttons are selling a warehouse development at Tanners Yard in Bermondsey where one-bedroom flats cost around £30,000.

Russell Taylor of Savills is advising developers to change the mix in their schemes to increase the proportion of one-bedroom flats. They are popular both with owner-occupiers, as first and second homes, and with tenants. Both Taylor and Marshall warn investors to check carefully the strength of the rental market in the specific area in which they are buying. They have seen some eyebrow-raising yields being offered in some of the Docklands' poorest rental locations.

Tom Marshall thinks the real danger of over-supply will come in poorly built blocks which are being heavily sold to overseas investors. Rents achieved may be disappointing and there may be no capital gain because many have paid 10-15 per cent over the odds. "Those buildings that have been as much as 50 per cent sold to the Far East could become white elephants," he says.

Those most familiar with Docklands say there is a real danger of over-supply at the bottom of the market, but the area is robust enough to withstand the odd failure. Barrett, with 2,500 homes, is the largest and longest established housebuilder in Docklands. David Pretty, who has spearheaded its strategy, says it will remain active across all price ranges, although, significantly, his latest purchase is a prime site on the water.

Perhaps the best evidence of confidence in the future of the Docklands housing market comes from the estate agents. Russell Taylor of Savills, has bought in Limehouse and two of Tom Marshall's staff at Cluttons have bought at Boss House. Neil King of Alex Neil, an agent who has been in Docklands for 10 years, says he used to have to pay a premium to get staff to work in the area. Now he is having to filter the calls from West End agents looking for a move east.

■ Agents in Docklands (all codes 0171): Cluttons 407 3000; Savills 406 8800; Alex Neil 294 0888.

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## RUNNING AN ESTATE

# Wealth grows in forestry, holiday parks

Gerald Cadogan on a Cumbrian success story

The problem of keeping the estate intact was vast. But today the Lowthers still own their views - as befits a family prominent in Cumbria since at least the 12th century (although the Earl of Lonsdale title was not conferred until the late 1700s). Despite shrinkage from the time when half of Cumberland and Westmorland belonged to the family and they sent nine MPs to parliament, the estate remains huge.

James Lowther's business skills and 3,000 acres of woods - mainly Victorian oaks - saved the great estate when, as seventh earl, he succeeded his grandfather in 1953. The Depression, the second world war and the extravagant life of the famous Yellow Earl (the fifth, who died in 1944) hit the estate hard. "In 1910, the trustees allowed him £180,000 a year. By 1935, they could afford to pay only £6,000," said Lord Lonsdale. "So they told him to quit Lowther Castle."

The castle became a family furniture repository. The army took it over in the second world war and "half the estate as a training ground". In 1949, his grandfather summoned James from Tyneside where he was earning his living in construction. "I said to him, 'This place is bust. But give me six months and I'll consider it.' He called in accountants and lawyers - and found the oaks, planted to keep the navy in men o' war after the Napoleonic wars. "Cropping them enabled me to take the place on."

In an era of heavy capital taxes and 97.5 per cent marginal income tax, reliefs for forestry made it the most tax-efficient investment. He built a sawmill and cut the wood as fencing. Recapturing from the proceeds put the estate on the way to recovery.

It still has 50,000 acres of private land or forestry, sporting and mineral rights on common land, mainly between exits 33 and 40 of the M6 which runs through the eastern side of the Lowther land. Its 10,000-acre core holding is centred on Lowther, south of Penrith. There are also 16,000 acres round Grasmoor, let to the National Trust "for a shilling".

Lowther Castle symbolises the new order. The vast house (by Sir Robert Smirke) and garden had suffered terribly from the army in the war. So Lord Lonsdale took the roof off.

**'The rose garden was so heavily manured that the trees grew like anything'**

making a grand Georgian gothic ruin. The Lowther holding includes three landscape parks (the earliest dating from the 18th century), woods, lakes, quarries, caravan park, leisure park, housing association and the freehold of a holiday village (to open next year). From an 18th century high terrace - like that at Rievaulx in Yorkshire - we looked down on the 3,000-acre former deer park and a tract of Lowther Cumbria stretching to clumps of trees on the far horizon.

"The wealth has come from forestry and minerals," said Lord Lonsdale. Coming money from the coal on their west Cumberland estate, his forebears "built Whitehaven as a planned town" and collected farms for their mineral rights. But once coal was nationalised, he said that estate but kept the forestry and other mineral rights. Likewise in 1919, when

Manchester Corporation acquired 25,000 acres for the watershed for Haweswater reservoir (now part of North West Water), "we kept some of the sporting".

Today, the estates are a mixture of businesses that have grown out of managing the land, with a tilt to woods and quarries. "I had my estate agency group, and so started charging for advice" - it became a management buy-out as Lowther Scott-Harden.

Lowther Construction is another MBO, while Lowther Forestry soon started managing woods as far away as Sussex and Hampshire. Now Lord Lonsdale's third son, Jim, has persuaded the family - and its trustees - to invest in a £180,000 wood treatment plant for the sawmill and produce garden furniture as well as poles, pallets and fencing.

Much of the gardens went to woods. "The rose garden was so heavily manured that the trees grew like anything. We have just felled the first sixties spruce at 41 years old." How different from the old days when the gardens stretched to 80 acres, after being extended by 50 acres to honour the Earl's visit on August 19 1885, as a tablet on a then new gate lodge records. Now the lodge is marooned on the other side of the M6. "They wanted to move the motorway further away from it. I said, 'Don't do that. You'll take away good farmland. I don't mind cutting off the German emperor.'"

Buying 1,100 acres of wood next to his land from the Grosvenors (who had themselves bought it in 1947 for its tax advantages) was a coup, helping Lord Lonsdale towards doubling the woods to 8,000 acres. He said: "I bought it as my pension to let me hand over the core estate."

The estate fences are a mixture of old, grey lichenous oak

and freshly cut larch. As he planned four decades ago, his first postwar plantings are ready to come down. "When we put in fences from those Victorian oaks, we thought they would last a bit over 40 years when we could replace them with what we had planted." That is how it is happening.

But Lord Lonsdale is pessimistic about the new grant-driven regime for forestry. He said that the old tax-relief system encouraged traditional estates because all establishment costs could be set against income tax. Then "the City of London wide boys got hold of the scheme", abusing it until Nigel Lawson brought in the new system which "has wrecked traditional forestry". Now it "takes 20 to 30 years before the yield from thinning meets the annual costs" and,

in common with other big owners, he is planting less. (Private plantings are not meeting the Forestry Commission's expectations.) "Death duty (inheritance tax) is the main reason now to own forestry as part of a family estate strategy," he said.

The farms total 23,000 acres (18,500 tenanted with an average size of 275 acres) with cattle and sheep, or arable farming to feed the cattle. His own 350 beef breeding cattle have had four cases of BSE in four years because of cows bought from different dairy farms. He said: "We'll probably go ourselves to a closed herd."

Strong lamb and chicken prices are the other side of the BSE story. The farm has 2,000 ewes which produce about 4,000 lambs. But, as we talked, Graeme Hector, managing director of the farming busi-

nesses, arrived with a fax with "bad news about the chickens". The price was down as consumers went back to beef. But chickens have done well every year, except in 1993 when salmonella was widespread. The year after, when many small producers had gone out of business, "we made five times as much profit as before".

Two quarries produce less volatile income. ARC (part of the Hanson group) uses one for roadstone, paying royalties. The other is for limestone for steelmaking.

In 1952, Lord Lonsdale ordered a geological survey to see if he had the right sort of limestone for blast furnaces. As the results were good, he bought more of the mineral rights below the common land where the quarry is. Close to the M6 and the main west

coast railway, it came into operation in 1960 and produces 120 tonnes a year under lease to British Steel.

Leisure is another money-spinner and publicises Lowther - through its caravan park and the leisure park. Franchised out, it is like a US action park, says Lord Lonsdale. Lowther also has annual driving trials - Prince Philip is a regular competitor - and a country fair. More than 50,000 people visit. It is an attempt, says Lord Lonsdale's son-in-law Robert Benson, who co-ordinates the estates, to show people "what goes on in the countryside, both work and leisure".

Inside the wood, bought from the Grosvenors, is the latest attraction (let on a 150-year lease). Rank is building a holiday village with 760 lodges and nine restaurants on 370 acres. The Lowthers will continue to

run the rest of the wood. "We shall not fell wholesale round the village but encourage natural regeneration through thinning," said Lord Lonsdale.

"There is room for eight of these in the UK. This will be the fourth." Later, saying the electricity pylons, he said: "They need an extra wayleave now to add fibre optic cables. That will bring in some more money."

And so with his imaginative pragmatism - and some luck - the estate thrives. It is light years away from his forebears' extravagance. If this disappoints those with a romantic view of being a big landowner, it has kept a large chunk of Cumbria viable and provides work - the holiday village will employ 700 - and housing for many Cumbrians. *Lowther Driving Trials and Country Fair: August 9-11.*



Lord Lonsdale with Jim Lowther, the earl's third son (left) and Robert Benson, managing trustee

Anthony Johnson

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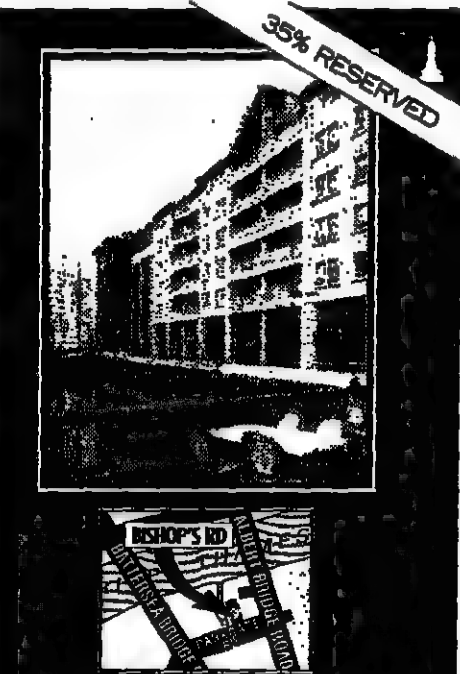
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## EQUESTRIAN PROPERTY

# The cost of a four-legged friend

Gerald Cadogan on houses for horses

Everything equine – racehorse, hunter or pony – is a luxury. And properties with good accommodation for horses are costly. If you intend buying a horse property, make sure you know what the previous owners used it for.

Horses need pasture, loose boxes, blankets, tack (saddles and fastenings) and winter feed.

The vet does not call for free. And riders wear a costly uniform. It can start, as children, with a hacking jacket and Pony Club tie and graduate to full hunting rig. Add the expenses of livery (having the horse kept in stables) or employing a groom (in effect, one's own private livery), and the sums rise sharply.

Then one has to ride at meets or shows. A new horse box can easily cost up to £20,000 – or more depending on how many extra comforts it has for the riders and/or grooms.

Even a humble trailer may cost £2,000.

The price of paddocks has gone up too. Since they are seen as amenity land, they are at a premium to agricultural land. Today they are likely to cost between £4,000 and £6,000 an acre, which is partly an effect of the rise in farmland prices. "I have even sold a paddock of under an acre at a rate of £10,000 an acre," says Ian McConnell of Savills. He added: "The first acre always costs most. If the land goes up to 4 or 5 acres, it reduces proportionately."

In spite of the bills, the British and the Irish unite in a love of horses and a readiness to spend large sums on the animals, whether directly or by proxy in the betting shop.

Before buying a horse property, do some homework. If the property was used for racehorse training, breeding and showjumping, or if the owner was a jockey, dressage-master, eventer, or rodeo regularly to hounds, the odds strengthen that it will be the sort of place where your horses will be comfortable.

An example in Ireland is Cor-

ries at Bagenalstown in Co Carlow, a fine Georgian house near Mount Leinster which Jordan was due to bring to auction on Wednesday. Its previous owner was Denny Cordell-Lavack who was in the rock 'n' roll business but turned – in good Irish fashion – to training horses and greyhounds. In 1990, he had the top Irish two-year-old. The yard at Corries has 25 loose boxes on 28 acres and there is an all-weather gallop on a further 18 acres.

Rock music and horses also combine at Hockenden Farm in the Chilterns, near High Wycombe. It belongs to Alvin Lee, guitarist of Ten Years After. Besides paddocks, stabling and a field shelter, the house boasts two recording studios. The price from Andrew Milson is £550,000.

A conventional horse property in prime hunting ground is Park House at Gaddesby, between Leicester and Melton Mowbray. This Georgian house with 11 acres is in the Queen's Friday country, and the Cottage more, Belvoir and Farns are in



Another stud for sale...

boxing distance. Such famous hunts make an enticing prospect. Fisher Hoggarth and Savills ask for £550,000.

Also in Leicestershire, the home of Desert Orchid is for sale. This great steeplechaser was bred and brought up at the Manor House at Ab Kettleby, near Melton Mowbray (John D Wood in Oxford, £380,000).

Or you could buy a place that produced a runner-up in the Grand National – Romany King in 1993. Queensford Farm is outside Dorchester-on-Thames, between Oxford and Henley. It also bred Couldn't Be Better which won the Hennessy Gold Cup in 1985. The house is Queen Anne and the price £380,000 from Strutt &

Parker in Newbury.

For those wishing to breed horses, Pat Eddery's Barretts town stud, built in the 1960s, near Aylesbury costs less with 72 acres (John D Wood in Oxford, £380,000) than the first million pound yearling that it produced.

Another stud for sale is Elm-

Edmunds (S & P in Ipswich, £1.2m), which has bred or raised several winners of big races and was originally the home of the leading stallion, Indian Ridge. The price includes 120 acres and three cottages, as well as the expected foaling unit, stallion box, covering barn and covered exercise yard.

An equally good racing connection is the house that John Francombe built 20 years ago, and later sold, near Lambourn in Berkshire. Windy Hollow (John D Wood in Winchester, £525,000) comes with 22 loose boxes and an indoor school.

At Holyport, near Maidenhead in Berkshire, Lane Fox offers two houses – Belmont Farm and Great Oaks – with stabling that may appeal to those who want to ride in Windsor Great Park (with permit) rather than hunt. Both are priced at £750,000.

Further from London, horse properties are cheaper. From the 52-acre Broadmead Farm at West Knollys (Humberts, £575,000) one may hunt with the South & West Wiltshire and the Portman and Blackmore Vale hunts are in boxing distance.

In Somerset, Foxstow House near Withypool (Jackson-Stops, £235,000) was built of Canadian cedar in 1937 in the heart of what is now the Exmoor National Park, with 17 acres and views down the Barle valley. Here you can chase foxes or ride out with the Devon and Somerset Stag-hounds.

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## HOMES FOR EMPTY NESTERS

# Older buyers who set a standard

Anne Spackman on a market which is increasingly sophisticated

There used to be an expectation that, as people grew older, their thoughts would turn to bungalows and cottages by the sea. Some still do. But the last few years have seen a growing trend for wealthy, older buyers to go for smart, new, town centre developments. A new house with four bedrooms, or a penthouse, is as likely to sell to a couple in their 50s or 60s as it is to a growing family.

Empty-nesters are sophisticated buyers. There may only be two of them - most of the time - but they are accustomed to a certain standard of living. They would no more trade the family house for a shoebox than they would their Rover for a Mini. With retirement approaching, they would prefer to spend a large capital sum on a new property in return for low running costs.

The developers who have profited most from this trend are those who have bought town centre sites in historic places like Winchester, Cheltenham and Edinburgh. Often they are building in conservation areas, which means conforming to the architectural style of the neighbourhood and paying great attention to materials and detail. The high cost of these competitive sites also means they must go for quality properties in order to get a decent return.

The result has been a great improvement in the standard of property available, which, in turn, has attracted the kinds of buyers who would previously have shunned new-build. (Interestingly, the same town

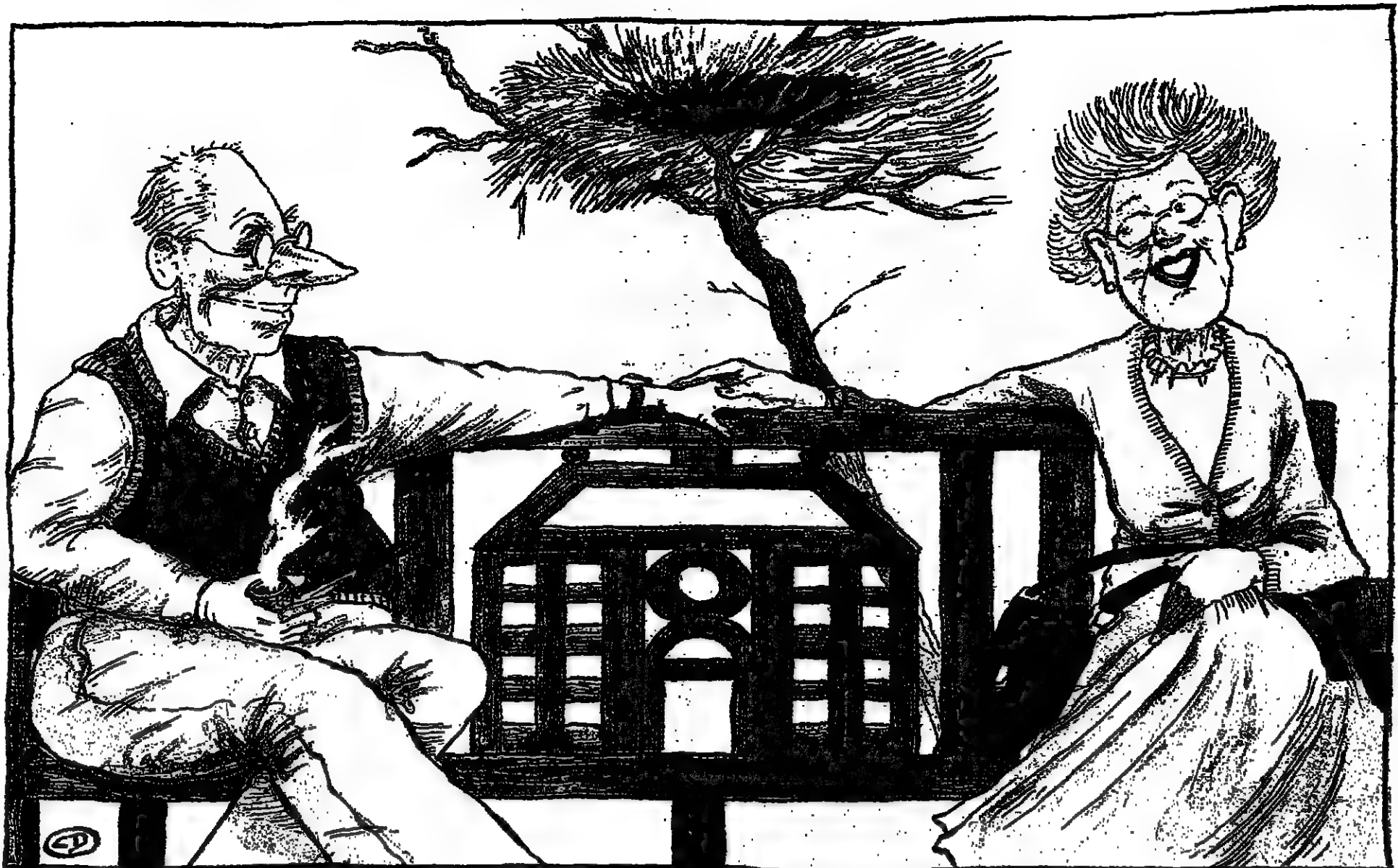
centre sites have always been sought by upmarket retirement developers who know their customers want to be within walking distance of the shops. But few empty-nesters feel ready to sign up for a scheme labelled "OAPs only".)

When Try Homes launched the first phase of its development at the old Peninsular Barracks in Winchester, 75 per cent of the buyers were older couples trading down, mostly from homes in Hampshire. The first phase consisted of three-bedroom mews cottages with courtyard gardens, priced at around £140,000. They were designed by a local architect, Hugh Thomas, whose involvement has generated a lot of interest in the scheme.

The St James Mews is one of the few new-build elements in what is mainly a conversion of Grade II listed buildings around the old parade ground. The most impressive, the King's House, is being converted into apartments with six bedrooms, costing from £165,000 to £185,000. The other old buildings, including the Wren House and The Bailey, are being converted into houses.

One of the first people to reserve an apartment in the King's House was Bill Heller, the deputy lieutenant of Hampshire and a prominent local businessman still involved part-time with the family's cable business, Millflex.

Heller and his wife, Jean, wanted to release some of the capital in the family home to pass on to their children, while retaining a base in Winchester within walking distance of shops and hospitals.



Peninsular Barracks was appealing particularly because of its location, its historic association with the city and its period architecture. "Of course, security is another important feature," Heller says. "Sadly, you have to worry about that with a house in the country."

Many of the buyers at Winchester have a history of involvement with the army. Few are taking out mortgages. The Hellers are buying as a second home but, for most others, it is their only and, possibly, last one. The Peninsular Barracks development, which comprises 104 houses and flats, will be finished in 1997.

Security is one of the top priorities of most new home buyers, but, for people approach-

ing retirement, it is particularly important. They have the time to travel and want to enjoy it without worrying about possible break-ins.

Good security, low heating and repair bills and freedom from gardening are the advantages of a new home cited by most older buyers trading down. But few would consider them if they came wrapped in a bland modern apartment block. To go from Regency to a standard box would be too much. But how hard is it to go to replica Regency?

Marjorie and Keith Imiah traded down from a five-bedroom Victorian home in Cheltenham to a penthouse a mile away in a Beaufort Homes terrace on Montpellier Spa Road. Do they feel claustrophobic in

their smaller home? Do they miss having a garden?

"Ask me that in six months," says Marjorie Imiah. "I do miss my rhubarb, but I'm building up a pot garden on our terrace. When my younger son came home, he was rather shocked at the size of the spare bedroom. But we are delighted with the apartment. Being on the top floor, we have a good feeling of light and space. The main bedroom, the sitting room and the dining room are all a good size. We have a very large south-facing terrace. It is superbly finished on the inside and the outside."

"One of the things that sold it to us was the location. We can walk everywhere. I can see across to the town hall. If we want to go out for supper, we

can have a bottle of wine and walk home."

More than half the 42 apartments in Montpellier Spa Road sold to people over 50. Beaufort Homes has got planning permission for a similar development nearby, next to the Queen's Hotel. The Imperial Square apartments will go from 1,000 sq feet upwards and cost from £150,000 to £350,000.

In Edinburgh, the developer Applescross has found empty-nesters to be its core buyers of smart apartments in the city's best residential districts. They normally move from a larger house less than 2 miles away.

Their agents, DTZ Debenham Thorpe, did a survey of buyers at Christmas and identified their top priorities: they want a lift, excellent security, a bal-

cony or terrace, a good-sized dining room and sitting room to take their family and furniture, plenty of storage and a garage. "We found we were giving them too many bathrooms," says John Brown, residential director of DTZ Debenham Thorpe. "One lady said, 'Have you tried spending a day clearing them?'"

He is now selling a new development by the Walker Group - a conversion of a crescent of Victorian houses in Rothesay Terrace which had served as the headquarters of the Hydro Electric Board. The first phase of apartments will not be available until September, but £1m worth of reservations were taken in the first sales weekend. Prices range from £87,000 to £190,000.

John Brown says: "In sites like this, we sell to international people coming back home from overseas. I sold a penthouse to one client who bought from Hong Kong after seeing the property on the internet."

"Investors are starting to look at Edinburgh now but, for properties worth over £100,000, it is difficult to get a good enough rental income to make it attractive. The majority of our buyers are local empty-nesters."

■ Try Homes, Peninsular Barracks, Winchester from Beaufort Homes, 01454-811444; Rothesay Terrace, Edinburgh, from DTZ Debenham Thorpe 0131-433 2222.

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Yours sincerely,

*John Brown*  
Residential Director  
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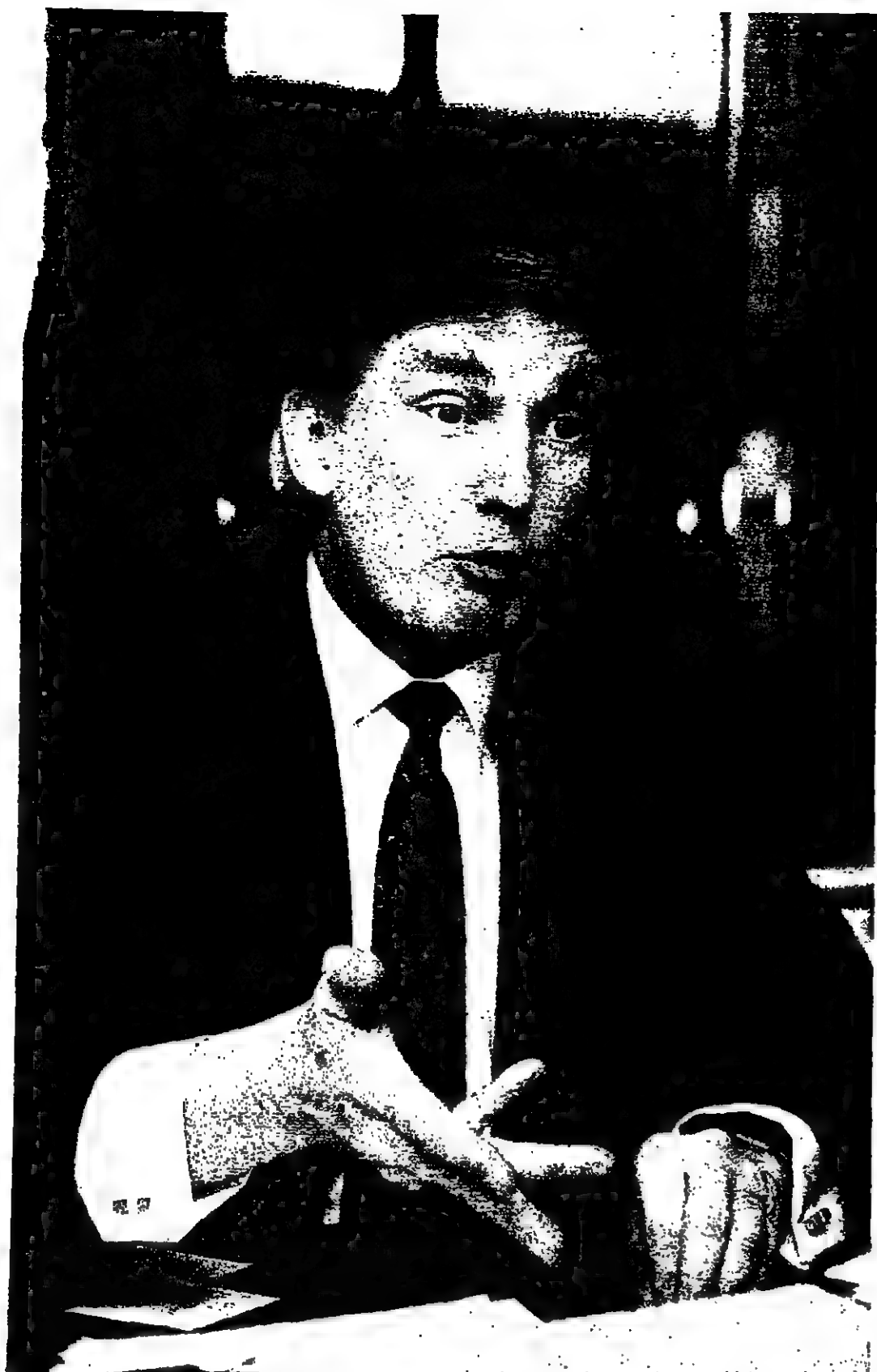
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**Weekend FT**



# Building a reputation on quality and glamour

Anne Spackman talks to Donald Trump about his heroes and passions



Donald Trump: a man who just wants the best

Normally there would be no need to show Donald Trump a menu. He likes to describe himself, in a phrase which embraces more than just his eating habits, as a steak and potatoes man. But right now, steak in Britain is off.

"Normally I only eat steak," Trump says, as the waiter hands him a menu. "But as I got off the plane this morning, let's just say it wasn't what I was most looking forward to." He paws at the tablecloth with an imaginary hoof.

Not used to making choices from menus, he asks for suggestions. The waiter suddenly appears with a trolley of rack of lamb, pink lamb, broccolini and delectable potatoes. "That looks fine," says Trump. "I'll have it well done. And go heavy on the potatoes."

We are lunching at Claridge's, where the Trump entourage is staying on this leg of its European tour. He is selling Trump International Hotel and Tower, his latest gleaming bronze edifice on the south-west corner of Central Park in New York. He is also selling the comeback of Donald Trump. Given his taste for five-star, modern luxury, it is difficult to imagine him feeling at home in such an antique setting.

The wine list is as unfamiliar as the menu. Trump does not drink, nor does he smoke. "Two of my better habits," he adds wryly, ordering a Virgin Mary. He describes an amusing lunch a couple of years ago where the journalist had so much wine to drink that he was incapable of asking any questions. I order a large bottle of fizzy water.

So if drinking and smoking are out, how does Trump cope with stress? After all, he has come more of it than most. This is a man who in two years went from being listed by Forbes magazine as one of the 20 richest people in the US to being \$8.8bn in debt (his figure).

His financial collapse coincided with a divorce so public that it rivaled that of the Duke and Duchess of York. He would love the comparison. The royal family is one of his main topics of conversation throughout lunch. Although a big man, but not a fat one, he clearly does not scoff his way through the bad times. So what does he do?

"Even in the worst times I never really felt under stress. I don't say that to compliment myself. I think it is a genetic thing. I never thought I would not come through. I do have a couple of idiosyncrasies, though," he adds. And they are? "Unprintable in a newspaper."

I persuade him to have a starter in order to keep me company. His lobster bisque arrives along with my smoked salmon. Is it good? "It's fine." He seems slightly surprised not to have been served first.

On to more important matters. The royal family, for instance. Trump's memory for the detail of recent episodes in the royal saga would rival any member of the House of Windsor fan club. Yet while he loves the gossip, he is also full of sympathy for the way they have had to live out their personal crises in the full glare of the camera. After all, he knows how it feels.

While he may say he can handle stress better than most, there is no doubt that the bad times dominate his thinking. His sympathies and interests mesh completely with his own experiences. His conversation is all about famous people who have faced a crisis either in their financial or personal lives. If they have survived that crisis - as he has done - they are the beneficiaries of his total respect. If they have not, that is the way it goes.

Take Robert Maxwell, for instance. "I think he took a nose-dive. What's happened to his sons? They got off? Good. The press were really after them but I think he was the one behind it all. Didn't his wife have a go at him in a book?" Yes, I say, but she had suffered considerably at his hands over many years. He shrugs. If there is one group of people he does not have sympathy for, it is former wives.

Nick Faldo is another Trump hero. He imagines every English schoolboy wants to be him. "No? He's not a big hero over here?" Not really, I say. Schoolboys generally worship footballers rather than golfers. Then again, he didn't treat his wife too well. "He treated her well financially," he counters.

"I respect Nick Faldo because he is a champion. You may not like the guy, but you have to respect him." He also respects Margaret Thatcher, Frank Sinatra and Bob Hope. "To

stay at the top in that kind of industry..." he shakes his head in amazement. But the person whom Trump considers the greatest survivor of is the Queen. "Forty years without a single mistake," he says incredulously.

The lunch is being eaten fast, consumed rather than relished. The lamb and potatoes have been vacuumed up. He orders his favourite drink, Diet Coke. Then the pudding trolley arrives along with his right-hand woman, Norma Feederer. "What's that sucker in the middle?" he asks pointing to an elegant mango soufflé.

"Have you got any of your famous rice pudding?" They haven't, but they have bread and butter pudding.

**'People have confidence in what I do. They love me to come to their area'**

g. "What is this? This is delicious," he says, with real pleasure, persuading Feederer to try some.

She wants to know if Trump would like a professional to play with at Turnberry, where he is hoping up for a quick round of golf the next day. He certainly would. What is his handicap? "It used to be a scratch. Now it's five. I used to be a good golfer."

A day off is a rare thing for the Donald, as his former wife, Ivana, called him. His claim that he is no workaholic comes before I have even asked the question. But before London, he completed a round of 68 presentations in less than four weeks. After London it is on to Paris. "I know you can get into trouble if you keep on working," Trump says. "But it's my life. I enjoy my work and I know how to do it."

Work for Trump means hotels, apartment blocks and casinos, and linking them all is his number one passion, property. Mention of the word seems to switch on an adrenalin tap. "When I went \$8.8bn in debt, it was second only to Olympia

& York. The difference was, I had great property. I think Canary Wharf [Olympia & York's nemesis] is a great building - probably the highest quality in London - but it is not in a good location.

"You get a reputation in life and sometimes it's good and sometimes it's not so good. My reputation is for quality. I go for the best locations and the best quality. People have confidence in what I do. Everybody loves me to come to their area."

"In England your past architecture is some of the greatest in the world. You have got great country houses and great estates and town houses but you have not captured the idea of glamour."

But rich English people tend to aspire to live in old property. I interject: "People used to think that in New York until I built Trump Tower. Now they pay an average of \$1,000 a square foot to live there. London is ready for something like I do."

He is suddenly taken with this idea. Can I suggest any sites? Where is the top location in London? It has to be freehold. He is not interested in any of this leasehold nonsense. He must also be able to build high. I suggest the ugly barracks overlooking Hyde Park might do. He arranges with Savills, his London agents, to see it the next day.

In the meantime, where would this man who loves quality property like to live if he could choose anywhere in the world? "Well, I have Mar-a-Lago which is the number one estate in the US. San Simeon is number two. It's in the heart of Palm Beach. When it was built in the 1920s they spent \$20m. They went to the most beautiful places in the world and got ideas and took them back and recreated them - but better. I have ceilings of carved gold - not paint, but bullion."

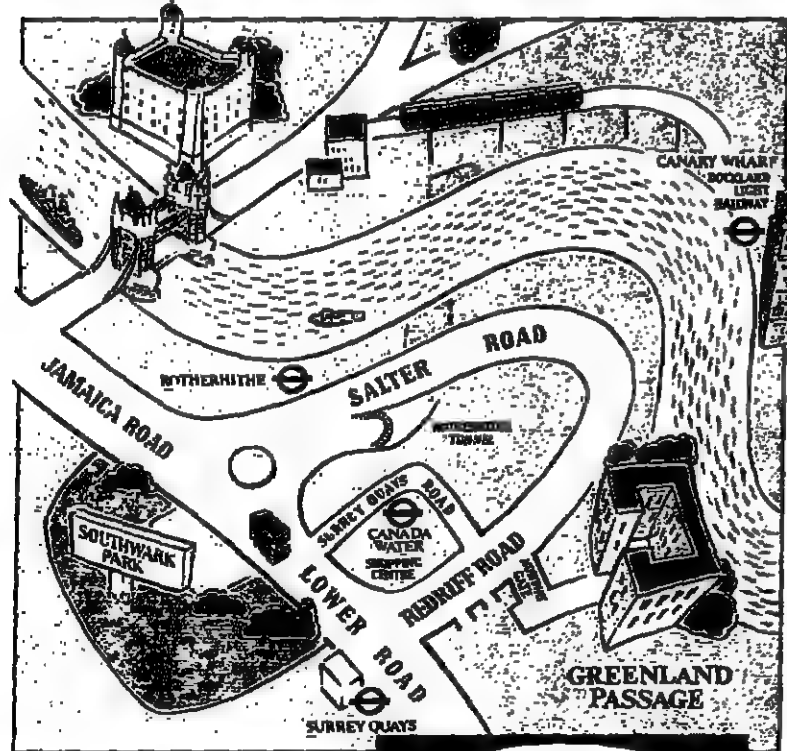
Residents of Trump International are not being offered that level of luxury, but they are getting a top quality fit-out. "I understand one thing," Trump says. "There is a difference between a man buying for business and buying personally. I have seen people who will kill in business for an extra nickel and yet will spend \$5m for a great apartment the next day. They just want the best."

Is he the same? "You bet."

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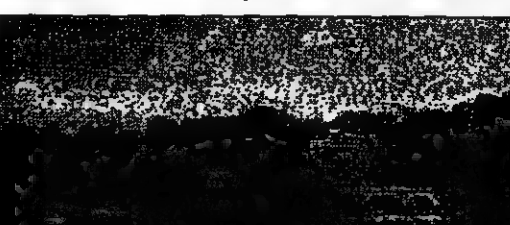
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The accommodation includes 4 bedrooms, 2 reception rooms, kitchen and bathroom.

The cottage was reportedly lived in by P.H. Emerson, the well known "Brookside" photographer and by Arthur Rackham, painter and illustrator. The cottage is at present stored in a barn near Wells in Somerset, where it can easily be viewed.

Price: £28,000 own.

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## COUNTRY RENTALS

## Boltholes for the smart set - at a price

When Robin Paterson of Cluttons London Residential took over the Hampton estate agency chain in February he picked country rentals as a growth area.

Cluttons had been conspicuously successful at selling new developments in London to overseas investors and running the rental business for them. But their tenants were largely the young, mobile, city employees who have boosted the entire London rental market by around 25 per cent in the last four years. How many of those would he find in Chipping Sodbury?

Well, by country, he meant the London commuter belt rather than the land of sheep and hills. He meant home counties towns in which the market is dominated by London and where Hampton's strength is concentrated.

There are good reasons for agents to be confident about the rental business in the commuter belt and the country proper. The business may be more fragmented than the corporate-dominated market in London, but there is increased demand in almost all sectors.

Cluttons in Oxford, says rental advertisements for country properties now take up nearly three pages of the local newspaper. "Ten years ago you would have been lucky to have seen three properties, let alone three pages," says Jonathan Scott-Smith.

Two factors have affected prospects in the London commuter zone. The past year has seen a growing trend for international companies to prime their relocation budgets.

Instead of paying the rent for families to move to Hampstead or Kensington, where rental costs are very high, they have actively encouraged them to look for a home outside in counties such as Berkshire or Surrey.

They have argued, for families in particular, that the quality of life is better outside the capital. But their over-riding concern has been to save money. A smart London house is likely to cost £1,600 a week, whereas a house in prime commuter territory is likely to be less than £1,000 a week.

This shift may help explain why the increase in rents in prime central London has slowed over the past six months, despite a supply/demand imbalance. It seems in the rental market - as in the owner-occupier sector - people would rather look elsewhere than pay what they see as over-the-odds prices.

The second confidence-boosting

factor has been the arrival of the first investors in places such as Esher and Ascot. Hamptons have recently sold a new five-bedroom, four reception room family house to a Hong Kong investment buyer.

The house cost £425,000 and the monthly rent is put at £3,500 a month. They have also recently sold a two-bedroom, two-bathroom flat in a new development in Ascot to a UK investment buyer for £155,000. It is expected to rent out for £1,500 a month.

The investors will have been attracted by figures showing a "yield" of around 10 per cent to 11 per cent on these properties. As with so many investments, this figure is reached simply by dividing the capital value of the property by the monthly rent.

It does not include the other costs of purchasing - legal fees, stamp duty etc - nor the costs of furnishings. It is also based on the optimistic notion of 100 per cent occupancy.

Property Vision, the agency

**'A good period house in Hampshire is as rare to find to rent as it is to buy'**

which acts for buyers, includes all these factors in its investment analyses and comes up with typical net yields of nearer 8 per cent.

Beyond the commuter belt the main factor driving the rentals market is the change in family buying patterns. During the recession, when houses were difficult to sell and prices were falling, families chose to sell up first and move temporarily into rented property, rather than selling and buying in one move.

During the recovery this pattern has strengthened rather than weakened. It is now the norm for families moving out of cities to rent in the new area: it gives them a chance to find out where they would like to live and to be ready to buy as soon as the right house comes up.

Barbara Blanchard, who runs John D Wood's country rentals, says these families are her staple business. "The general pattern is for couples who have spent their early married life in London to move out when their children are born," she says. "They normally

rent for about two years to see how the husband will cope with the commuting and to be on the spot when the right house comes up.

"A good five-bedroom period house in somewhere like Hampshire is as rare to find to rent as it is to buy. The only reason they come up for rent is because the owner has been moved abroad. People pay on average around £2,000 a month," John D Wood has let a Georgian farmhouse near Andover for that price, with four bedrooms, four reception rooms, a guest cottage and an acre of garden.

When such a house does come up for rent Blanchard has a list of at least 20 potential tenants to call. Such is the shortage of this kind of property that she finds Londoners will take on a house to rent before they have even sold their own property. But despite this heavy demand rents are not rising. "To find £24,000 a year out of earned income is a lot of money," she says. "People simply cannot afford to pay more."

Tenants have to look carefully for hidden extras when they take on a property of this size. In some cases - like the house near Andover - the services of a gardener are included in the rent. In others, a gardener or housekeeper may be available at extra cost.

One bill increasingly being added to the rent is the water rates, which landlords traditionally used to pay. Hamptons has a 16th century manor house near Cambridge with four reception rooms and five bedrooms where the £2,500 a month rent excludes the gardener, the water rates and council tax.

Outside the south of England Strutt and Parker calculates that the rent for a medium-sized country house is likely to range from £900 a month to £800 a month. The cost of a cottage depends on its tourist potential. In popular holiday areas, such as south-west England and the Lake District, cottages can command high weekly rents in the winter, but an over-supply in the winter helps keep long-term rents down.

One group of landlords who have benefited from the increasing popularity of renting are the owners of country estates, especially those within reach of a major town. Young professionals often prefer to rent a former agricultural worker's cottage than a shop on the high street. Yolande Barnes, of Savills, says: "As cottages become vacant it is now worth landlords keeping them up."

Alternatively, estate owners may prefer to rent their own homes. A new market has emerged in properties which are available to borrow rather than to buy. One of the most spectacular, in terms of its lineage, was Barnwell, the country home of the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester which Savills let last year. This year the Duke and Duchess of Somerset decided to rent their home, Bradley House in Wiltshire. They were seeking offers over £50,000 a year for the rent of the house, gardens and parkland - including a bed slept in by Henry VIII.

These properties normally go to



Strutt and Parker is offering Quendon Hall, in Essex, for £30,000 a year. It was once the home of Lord and Lady Inchcape



Bathurst Farmhouse on the West Sussex-Hampshire border. Agent Jackson-Stops



Horsbrook Hall in Staffordshire is available through Savills

international businessmen based in London who use them for entertaining and family weekends. The cost, depending on the exact location, can be anything from £30,000 upwards. John D Wood recently let an exceptional house in Hampshire to a media man for around £50,000 a year.

For £30,000 a year, Strutt and Parker is offering Quendon Hall, in Essex, once the home of Lord and Lady Inchcape and more recently used as a management training centre. The property is Grade I listed,

with nearly 7,000 sq ft of accommodation and is just 37 miles from London. At £42,000 a year S and P has West Park, at Rockbourne, in Hampshire, available to rent from one to five years. It is a substantial country house with six reception rooms in a 400-acre park, although only 3 acres of land come with the property.

Another house which comes into the special category is Arvington Park, near Winchester, in Hampshire. Within its 50-acre of grounds are a walled garden, a lake and a

pool built by Charles II for Nell Gwynne. The house has four reception rooms, three bedroom suites and a guest suite and is available part-furnished for £3,500 a month.

**Country house lettings: Hamptons 0171-493 8322; John D Wood 0255-358004. Strutt and Parker rentals are handled by individual offices: Cheshamford 01464-558201, Salisbury 01753-329741, head office 0171-589 7888; Cluttons, Clarendon 01865-346011; Property Vision 0171-5283333.**

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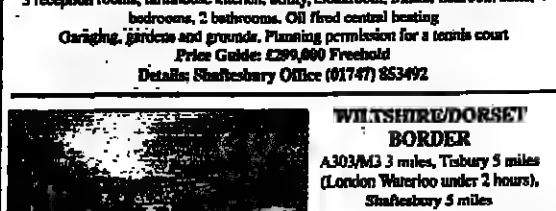
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Details: Shaftesbury Office (01747) 853492



## WILTSHIRE/DORSET BORDER

A303A3 3 miles, Tisbury 5 miles

(London Waterloo under 2 hours), Shaftesbury 5 miles

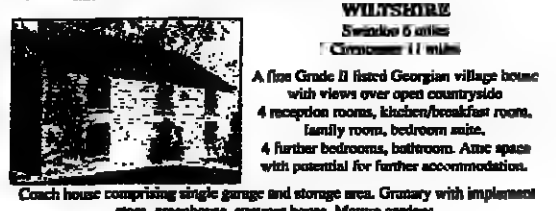
A period village house with large gardens adjoining woodland. Entrance hall, 4 reception rooms, kitchen, utility, cloakroom, 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms.

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Price Guide: £250,000 Freehold

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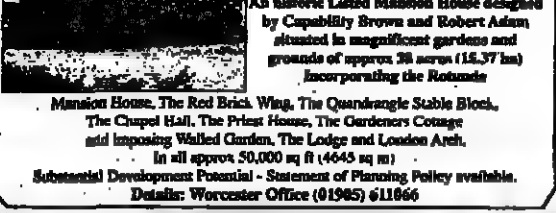
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## SOUTH AFRICA



The Houghton Estate, described by agents Savills as a 'unique opportunity for diplomats, advertising agents, architects doctors and corporations'

## High returns versus high security

Anne Spackman on the expansion of South Africa's 'safe' houses

If your company offered you a job in Johannesburg tomorrow, where might you live? In Hong Kong, your only option is a rented apartment in New York. It is that or a family house out of the city. But for most people, South Africa – and Johannesburg in particular – is an uncharted territory.

Since television pictures of the city have tended to show its buildings as a backdrop to a riot, it should come as no surprise to learn that the most important feature of any Johannesburg property is its security. Ask any estate agent about the virtues of a house and the level of security is mentioned first. In a new development, that would normally entail a perimeter wall topped with broken glass or barbed wire, security cameras and a 24-hour armed guard on the gate. That is before you get into the house itself.

Most new houses in Gauteng, as the region is now called, are built in cluster developments – private estates of detached houses within a secure bound-

ary. City workers drive out in the morning, park in a secure car park below their office and return home without stopping around town for a sandwich or a drink. They are too scared of being mugged.

These privations, of course, apply in cities worldwide but, in Johannesburg, the compensation, once within your compound, is a high standard of living. For the price of a two-bedroom, two-bathroom London flat, you can buy a four-bedroom detached house with a garden and swimming pool in one of the city's smart northern suburbs. The only problem is that, with the rand falling, you might want to rent rather than buy and the cost comparison is far less favourable in the rental market.

South Africa has no tradition of rented property. It is a land of owner-occupiers – at least, for those who have any money. The few properties that used to be available for rent came unfurnished in the strictest sense: they would not even include a cooker.

Now, with the steady influx

of overseas companies opening offices in Johannesburg, there is heavy demand for good quality, secure, furnished rental accommodation. The construction industry is working hard to meet it.

But, in the meantime, rents are high. Most overseas workers will pay around 10,000 rand a month (£1,200) for a typical cluster house. For R2m (£300,000), you could buy one of the best houses in the city. Some of the newest developments are, not surprisingly, being bought by investors taking advantage of the favourable yields.

Pam Golding Properties, the agent which dominates the top of the South African property market, is selling just such a development at Roman Close in the premier Hyde Park area of Johannesburg. The two-storey houses have three or four reception rooms, a swimming pool, good gardens – and very good security – and are priced at between R1.8m and R2.5m.

With land so plentiful, there is no pressure to build apart-

ments rather than houses, although the government is keen to increase housing density in the prosperous suburbs. Ronald Enzik, of Pam Golding, says a number of home owners are responding to that by building cottages for rental within their grounds.

Hyde Park lies to the north

**With land so plentiful, there is no pressure to build flats**

of Johannesburg, where the city's smart suburbs merge with the prosperous Sandton conurbation. Some financial companies are looking to relocate their offices from downtown Johannesburg to Sandton, where security is less of a worry. As a result, what was once a purely residential area is becoming a residential and



The Houghton Estate's conservatory/office block built on three levels

commercial mix. Agents are advertising properties which include an office building and a home. Anne Mackie, Savills' agent in Johannesburg, is selling the Houghton Estate, which comprises an eight-bedroom 1930s house, a guest cottage and a newly built three-storey office, with parking for 40 cars. The price is R4.7m.

The Swiss bank, UBS, is one of the firms considering relocating to Sandton. Mark Childs, who heads their South African operation, thinks there will be a general migration in that direction. He lives north of the city in a four-bedroom modern house with a swimming pool in a cluster development. The company pays around R10,000 to rent the house, which would cost less than R1m to buy. "When I think what I'm getting for my money in London, the rental yields here are amazing," Childs says.

Those who work in the finance sector may already have been offered a move to South Africa, such is the rate of expansion. Other companies

that have opened offices in the region include Chase Manhattan, Barings, SBC Warburg, Flettings, Bank of America and Hambros. The British were the first to move in and remain the number one international purchasers of property. The Americans come next, with the Malaysians close behind.

European manufacturers such as BMW and Siemens are also moving in, opening new sites on the corridor linking Johannesburg with Pretoria, 40 miles away. Childs believes that, in five years, the area will be transformed.

Amid all this energetic progress, people working in South Africa still find plenty of time for fun – and, first and foremost, that means sport. When Peter Caroe, of Knight Frank, had some South African agents visiting last month their first question was could he find tickets for the FA Cup final.

In Johannesburg, the banks who flee the city centre are most likely to be found in the gym at Sandton Towers or at the Johannesburg Country Club in the evenings. At the

weekend, they are likely to enjoy some high-level corporate hospitality at a cricket or rugby match.

Then there is the wildlife. Mackie points out that, in Cape Town, you could be anywhere in the world, she says, "but, if you are in Johannesburg, you are in Africa. The great attraction is to have a *plac-d-terre* in the bush to use for yourself or for corporate hospitality."

Mackie is selling a new development of seven private sites in the Madikwa Game Reserve, three hours' drive from the city. For R2m, you get a lodge to sleep 12, a Land Rover and tracker and the chance to see elephant, lion, leopard, buffalo and rhino. There is interest from Malaysian and Chinese companies.

But the main overseas buyers in Johannesburg and in South Africa as a whole are the British. London is the only city outside the country where Pam Golding Properties has its own office. Joanna Leonard, who runs it, says the British have

stopped window shopping and started buying. Those going to Johannesburg are likely to be corporates looking for relocation help, whereas those buying for themselves are going to Cape Town.

"These are mostly wealthy individuals who fancy the lifestyle," she says. "They are looking to spend around £300,000 to £400,000 and to keep a home in England."

For all the publicity surrounding the arrival of Mark Thatcher and Viscount Althorp in the Cape, the number of international customers buying in South Africa is still small. "The flights in and out of South Africa are full," says Peter Caroe of Knight Frank. "There is a lot of research going on. But, when it comes to buyers, we are talking about a handful of people."

**In Johannesburg (code: 0027-11) Ronald Enzik, Pam Golding Properties, 225 0586; Anne Mackie, Savills, 483 2052. In London (code 0171), Joanna Leonard, Pam Golding Properties, 629 2282; Peter Caroe, Knight Frank, 829 8171.**

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## HOLIDAY HOMES

## A paradise home in Bali or a villa in Spain

How long does it take to get to that special weekend retreat, asks Rosalind Russell. And is it worth the time and money?

David Bowie did it last year. Film director Roman Polanski is doing it this year. Both have decided to abandon once cherished holiday retreats, having stumbled on one of life's bitter ironies. If you are wealthy enough to own several homes, you are probably working too hard to enjoy them.

David Bowie - who owns homes in Switzerland and Los Angeles, has a boat on the Mediterranean and an eye on a property in Umbria - sold his \$4m fantasy home on Mustique in the Caribbean, asking a further \$1m for the contents. His neighbours included Princess Margaret and Mick Jagger. The Indonesian-style house and grounds had been three years in the making. But Bowie and his model wife, Iman, rarely had time to fly to the Caribbean.

It makes sense to sell the property to someone who will appreciate it and use it more regularly, the singer told his agents, Peres.

Polanski's three-storey villa on Ibiza stands on a hill overlooking the sea close to the Roca Llisa golf course. When asking Sotheby's International Realty to find a buyer with \$2m, he told them his workload meant he would only spend two or three weeks a year in the house.

"The magic figure is 2 1/2 hours' flying time," says Naomi Greatbanks, of Hamptons International. Effectively, the journey takes more like half a day once you include driving to the airport and check-in, but psychologically it is a quick journey and one which makes a second home worthwhile.

For British-based buyers, that draws Palma, Lisbon, Toulouse, Nice and Lyon within the magic circle. Gibraltar, Faro and Malaga are only a few minutes over. It is naive of people to imagine they will drive long distances to a holiday home, says Naomi. She adds that Hamptons have pulled out of once-popular areas of France such as the Dordogne. Only Gascogne, accessible from Toulouse, and Provence and the Côte d'Azur are holding firm, say Hamptons. "Almost



They went in search of paradise - and found Bali: five airlines fly directly from London to Bali

everything is for sale in the Dordogne. People just cannot get rid of property," she says.

"They are desperate to sell. But when we advertised a \$550,000 house in Provence, we had more than 100 inquiries and have booked six visits."

The house is one of a pair offered in the south of France. It is recently built, painted peach, with ivy-covered shutters. There is a large wine

cellar, pool and 7 1/2 acres. La Tuilerie is a restored Provencal pottery mill, with exposed beams, white walls and hand-made terracotta floor tiles. The six-bedroom house, with two swimming pools in an acre of grounds, is for sale at FF3.8m.

For Caroline and James Lewis, both in the film industry, a door-to-door, five-hour journey means they can visit their six-bedroom villa at Val-

errama, Sotogrande, in Spain, up to six times a year. The family stays for five weeks in summer. Golf is one of the biggest attractions of Valerrama, where Sir Ian MacLaurin, chairman of Tesco, the supermarket chain, built a house overlooking the third green. Sir Ian travels down at Easter, in the summer and for the Volvo Masters at the end of October.

The Lewises have owned La Leonera, 20 minutes from Gibraltar airport, for 10 years and have filled it with antiques. There are early morning flights from Gatwick and return flights on Monday morning, so that they can be back in London for mid-day meetings. The gardens are tended by a full-time gardener.

They have, however, decided

to build on another piece of land in the area and have asked Hamptons to find a buyer for their present property. The price is \$2.1m. Developers in Florida have been struggling to make inroads with second home owners. But with a 12-hour flight time, it is attractive only to those who can afford to spend months, rather than days, in their properties.

Portugal is an easier option for the spur-of-the-moment weekend break. Frankie and John Woods make the journey from Devon - using Exeter airport - to Faro in five hours. But to prove the exception to the rule they have also frequently driven down from Santander to their four-bedroom house, Quinta De Madeira, in the Algarve.

With their five children in

the car, they have covered a daunting 500 miles a day.

They spend two months there in summer. John Woods flying home in between to run his manufacturing business. The 100-year-old farmhouse was restored and extended by the Woods. When not in use, it brings in \$2,000 a week in holiday rental fees. It is for sale at \$275,000.

For some, of course, prosaic considerations do not apply. In 1983, Bradley Gardner was lying on a rock in the middle of a river in Bali wondering why he did not do this more often. Unlike other holiday romances, Gardner's love affair with Bali lasted. The British-born, Hong Kong-based businessman built his own Balinese-style house in the hills, an hour's drive from the airport.

Five years on, he has developed the Begawan Giri estate and is building seven more houses, each with private pool, gardens and natural spring water, which will sell for between \$2m and \$3m each. It is the first development of its kind in Bali. Electrical vehicles only will be allowed on the estate. Locally hand-carved furniture and antiques will be installed. Sunrises, sunsets and even wind flows have been accounted for in the design of each house.

Five airlines fly directly from London to Bali. But who will buy such expensive, individual houses so far from home? "People with a high net worth," Gardner says. "Those who think there is more to a holiday home than a sunbat, who have been everywhere else. And who do not want to sit around someone else's pool."

So smitten is he with his development, he has given up his retail business to oversee the project full time. Bali, he claims, is the Hawaii of south east Asia, but its magic lies in the culture and religion.

"We still have a house in England," says Newcombe-born Gardner. "We came back for Christmas and remembered why we left. Bali is paradise."

Sotheby's 0171-493 8080; Hamptons International 0171-493 8222; Begawan Giri inquiries to Madeira Collection in Hong Kong 00852-2566 2283.

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## GARDENING

# Don't let flowers have all their own way

Roy Barnes enthuses about vegetable growing

There used to be a well-established aristocratic principle, encouraged by the Gertrude Jekyll school of gardening, that vegetable growing was an inferior, unattractive sort of craft to be left to the vulgar.

Vegetable plots were to be hidden behind a wall or fence with the compost heaps, and kept away from the "pleasure" garden. Modern gardens have become so small that in this age of cheap supermarket ready-washed, packaged food, the vegetable plot has become almost an anachronism.

However, supermarkets do not sell everything. Keeping their eye, as they must, on the bottom line and their shareholders, they are firmly in the business of moving quick turnover goods to a mass market - fine for potatoes, red or white, cabbages and carrots, but can you buy *Scorzonera* there?

*Scorzonera hispanica*, common viper's grass, is a beautiful perennial, which takes up little space and can be grown anywhere with pride. It has attractive strap-shaped leaves, long black roots, and tall, lemon yellow daisy flowers. The leaves can be eaten young in salads, the roots, which taste something like asparagus, are peeled to reveal pure white flesh before boiling and, if some plants are left to flower, they will delight the eye well into the summer.

Twenty years ago I observed a common asparagus plant growing between a dwarf ever palmatum and a eucalyptus *fortunei*. According to received beliefs, it had no business to be there and should have been tucked away with its brothers and sisters in its own bed at the other side of the garden, but I liked it where it was, so there it has remained.

Each year it provides us with edible shoots in the spring and decorative sprays of fern-like fronds for the rest of the year. Botanically speaking, all plants are vegetables, some edible and some not; there is no reason why the attractive edible ones should not be grown in the



Growing these giant pumpkins is a science in which luck plays no part

See Column

same bed as the attractive non-edible ones.

A handsome and delicious biennial that you will not find in the supermarket is sea kale or Swiss Chard, a leaf beet which grows hardy, shining deep-green leaves with bright white ribs; its near cousins and equally good to eat, is the flaming-red Ruby Chard. The chards have all the taste and value of spinach with none of that fussy little plant's failings.

The globe artichoke is a majestic perennial for the flower border, standing up to 6ft tall, spreading its exotic deeply cut leaves and carrying the king of all thistle heads. You eat the buds, gently boiled for half an hour, pick off the leaves and chew the base of each leaf, flavoured with butter or French dressing, then remove the bunch of embryonic petals from the choke and eat one of the greatest gourmet delights known to man; but do leave some to flower. We favour Purple Globe, which

adds a deep colour to the border.

French runner beans can be bought in the supermarket, but what about the prolific climbing Italians. These should have been sown by now, outdoors in April is the best time, to crop in early June. But it has been such a late year in England that you could still sow them now. Merchant of Venice will grow up yellow flowers and fruits. Viola Cornetti will produce purple flowers and fruits - they assume the usual bean green colour during cooking. In June you can sow some stringless runner beans such as Butler or the white-flowered Desiree, which go on until the first frost.

Climbing beans will beautify any bare area, the kitchen wall or an old fence, but a good idea is to plant a columnar apple or pear tree as a permanent feature for some of your beans to grow up. The modern hybrid apple and pear trees take up little space, grow straight as a pole and bear fruit on the

trunk. Most are self-fertile and will grow in almost any part of the UK, so you could enjoy the blossom in the spring, the fruit in the autumn and your colourful beans all summer long.

Beans are legumes (plants that have "pea" flowers) which, unlike other plants, do not take up nitrogen from the soil. They extract nitrogen from the air and fix it in their roots. Do not pull up the dead bean plants, cut them at ground level and leave the roots to enrich the soil for the next crop. It is worth composting all your dead plants, together with all kitchen waste that will rot down and can be used as a mulch. If you are short of space, use bin liners with ventilation holes and store in a dustbin.

The foliage, flowers and fruits of many vegetables look well in a flower border or grown together in any space you have available. It is well worth growing a few that are not readily available in the shops.

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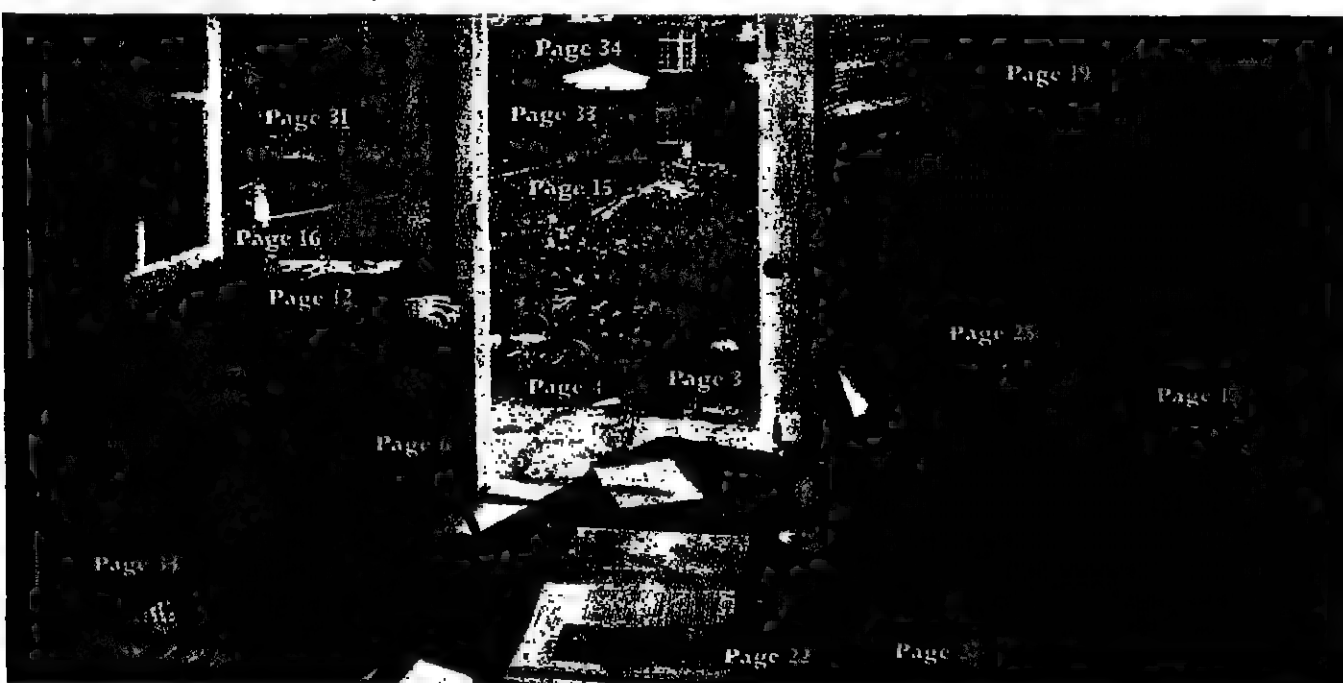
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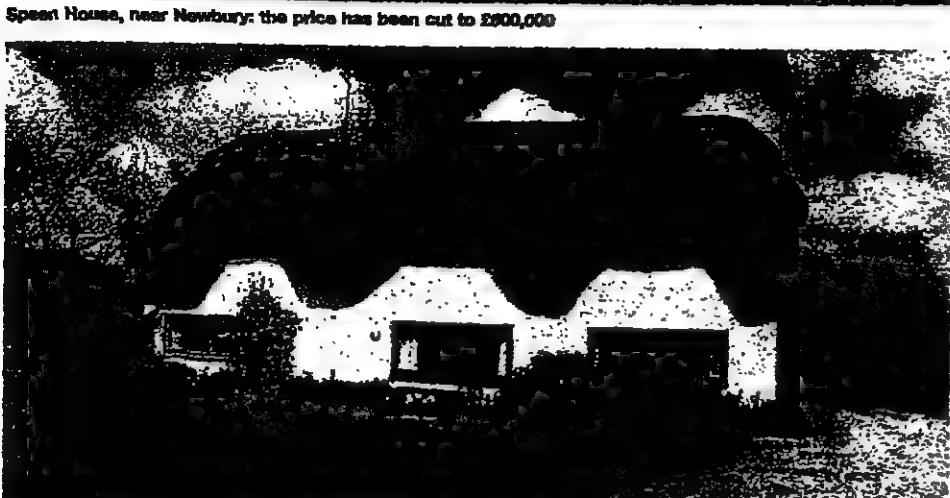
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## MOTORING / OUTDOORS

# A long-legged and luxurious load carrier

Stuart Marshall finds an estate which rides like an executive saloon

**W**hen the Vauxhall Omega CDX estate arrived, its transmission was set in sports mode and the electronic data panel recorded a fuel consumption of 33.8 mpg (0.187 l/100km). Within a day, and using the same tankful, I had pushed the reading up to 28.1 mpg (0.06 l/100km). Now, two fill-ups later, it is bettering 31 mpg (0.1 l/100km) in daily use. It will, I am confident, get better still.

All of which goes to show that, whatever the car, a sensitive right foot is the economy device that really counts. The Omega CDX estate is a big car with a moderate thirst because it is a diesel; its 2.5-litre turbo-charged and intercooled engine is sourced from BMW. Apart from the Omega and, of course, BMW's own 3-Series and 5-Series models, the same engine also powers the new Range Rover diesel.

There are some even more economical diesels - notably the direct-injection 6-cylinder

VW/Audi engine, also used by Volvo, and the Rover four-cylinder - but none is smoother than the BMW in-line six. For sheer urbanity it matches the naturally aspirated Mercedes-Benz 3-litre. Although its output is marginally lower (130 against 136 horsepower), it develops 30 per cent more pulling power at much lower revolutions.

This plays a vital part in making the Omega CDX estate my idea of a proper grand touring car. In the first place, it seats five in great comfort with a vast amount of luggage space and is air conditioned. Its acceleration and overtaking pick-up are as vigorous as a petrol-engined car's, yet at 80 mph/130 kph it is drifting along in near silence with the engine turning over at a mere 2,700 rpm.

Even if driven gently, the Omega's transmission stays in third gear until nearly 50 mph/80 kph, when the tachometer needle flicks back to little more than 1,600 rpm as it slips into top. From which it follows

that motoring on open country roads at the 60 mph/96 kph legal limit and 2,000 rpm is sheer relaxation.

After several weeks I still find the steering feels dead around the straight-ahead position. It is the Omega estate's only quirk, because whether running light or fully loaded, it handles, corners and rides like an executive saloon.

The load floor with the rear seats folded is long and wide enough to take a single bed - the acid test for a genuinely large estate car. As the front passenger seat backrest also folds, something narrow like a ladder up to 250cm/114in long can also be fitted inside. Anything bulkier has to go on top but roof rails are standard equipment. So are a stereo cassette with CD autochanger, cruise control and ultrasonic security alarm. Build quality and finish is what one expects of a medium priced German-made car.

Information like the time, ambient temperature, average/ instant fuel consumption and

radio programme are displayed so prominently that anyone who cannot take them in at a glance should not be driving.

Prices of less elaborately equipped Omega turbo-diesel estates start at £21,950; the CDX costs £27,150.

Every tyre is a compromise, none more so than the kind fitted to very high performance road-going cars. They have to stand up to the stress of violent acceleration and speeds of twice the legal limit on a clear piece of Autobahn or, more likely, on a racing circuit rented for a day of playing with other big boys in their expensive toys.

On corners, they must grip like limpets and steer with pinpoint precision whether the road is dry or streaming with water. On the motorway, they must run quietly; and, on country roads, stifle the shock of impacts with potholes, drain covers and broken-edged tarmac.

All of which provides tyre designers and rubber technologists with their greatest chal-



The Vauxhall Omega CDX turbo-diesel estate: combines performance with economy

lenge. Very high performance tyres have improved enormously in recent years. You no longer have to suffer a ride like that of a tumbler to enjoy the ultimate in handling and road-holding, or sacrifice wet grip to achieve reasonably long life.

One of the leading producers of these premier cru tyres is Bridgestone, a Japanese com-

pany which bought Firestone of the US eight years ago and manufactures tyres worldwide. I compared its latest S-02 tyre with its S-01 predecessor at the Motor Industry Research Association's proving ground in the Midlands last week.

On water drenched circular tracks with surface grip ranging from not much better than

black ice to normal wet-weather motorway, the S-02 held on at higher speeds than the S-01, had a gentler break-away and gave more warning it was about to let go.

Even better tyres are bound to come along in a few years time but at present, Bridgestone's S-02 has no superiors and few, if any, equals. More

than 30 sizes of S-02 in aspect ratios from 55 series to 30 series are available. Four S-02 tyres in size 205-55-16 for a VW Golf GTI would cost around £800. As a Ferrari or Lamborghini owner would have to pay more than £2,000 for a set of 285-30-18s, clipping a kerb could be a financial disaster.

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Fishing / Tom Fort

## A wild May day on the Piddle

It seemed a sound plan: to hear the biffin by the river, skim off from him the necessary smattering of science, and then get down to some serious mayfly fishing on a new river of high repute.

Circumstances, in the form of a skyfull of rain-swollen clouds driven in by a pounding southerly gale, dictated modifications to the strategy.

But at the end of as wild a late May day as I can recall, I was satisfied. There had been good science, some mayfly, even some trout, and a most enchanting stream.

This is the Piddle, which decorates a string of villages in stumorous Wessex, before joining its big sister, the Frome, for a leisurely approach to Poole Harbour.

Victorian sensibilities apparently found the "Piddle" suffix and prefix for these settlements objectionable, hence Tolpuddle, Alfpuddle and so on.

As a trout stream, the Piddle does not aspire to mix socially with its grand cousins, the Test, Itchen and Kennet. It is like a small country cousin with a comical name. But its breeding is as refined as theirs, for "like them" it runs through chalk. And, as I found, it has something to teach them.

It is tiny, much of it hardly wider than the length of my fly rod, although the water has a surprising depth and vigour. Its Lilliputian proportions make it ideal as a laboratory for anyone interested in studying how a chalkstream works, which is what great brains from the Game Conservancy Trust have been doing for the past few years.

River management is a subtle and improperly understood subject, and the fruits of the Trust's labours should be required reading for anyone whose concern for our much-abused south country trout streams extends beyond the filling of freezers and the harvesting of annual subscriptions.

The starting point is something we easily overlook: that our countryside and Nature, in its sense of original, unaltered condition, have nothing much to do with each other. Green and infinitely pleasing the countryside may be; natural it is not. Everything is shaped by us: fields, hedgerows, woods, water meadows, streams winding between nodding willows.

A trout river left to fend for itself is a river left to die. Abandoned, it becomes silted, its banks trampled into extinction by livestock or choked with trees, blotting out the necessary light. The aim of the Trust's scientists, Nick Giles and David Summers, was to discover how best to help the native brown trout, and to sustain its ideal habitat.

I need not present a detailed account of what I endured as Summers, with lucid passion, expounded what they had been up to. Suffice it to say that the rain was relentless and unpleasant, and I must have been very interested to have lasted as long as I did. I will

try to present the lessons as simply and clearly as I can.

For the wild trout to flourish, they need a sufficiency of clean water (abstraction is a problem on the Piddle, but not, in Summer's view, the main one). They also need clean gravel to spawn on, pools to shelter in, an adequate food supply and protection from predators.

The good doctor's powerfully articulated belief is that on a small stream, the greatest single inhibiting factor is having the banks open to cattle. They have big feet, clumsy manners, insatiable appetites. Nothing useful grows where their hooves land, and what should be firm barriers enclosing a lively flow of water become a flattened bog.

So, fence off your water, and let the grasses and weeds sprout up. If necessary, speed up the current by narrowing the banks, and building little

'I was surprised to find that the rain had eased, and I had enough strength left to fish'

weirs and groynes. Exterminating pike with pitiless energy, for in a little river they do dreadful slaughter. Shout your head off at the water companies which threaten your supplies (on the Piddle, Wessex Water are funding the Trust project). And encourage anglers whose idea of fun is to catch trout of a size proper to their habitat, admire them, and put them back.

An enlightened fellow called Richard Slocock has done all this on the Piddle. He imposed "catch and release" long before it became a moral football in the angling world. He did so because it was the only way to reconcile commercial exploitation of the native stock. And he has made a splendid job of it.

At the end of my course of instruction from David Summers, I was surprised to find that the rain had eased, and that I had enough strength left to fish. I was directed to the lowest of the Slocock beats, at Culesze, where I found a modest mayfly hatch in progress, with the trout sipping daintily. I had three, up to just over 1lb. They were fine fat fish that belonged to their water, and they dashed back with a fierce kick as I let them go. I was cheered up no end.

The Game Conservancy Trust runs a consultancy service for fishery owners. Tel: 01425-652381. Richard Slocock owns or controls several beats on the Piddle as well as the Frome. He has five trout-stocked lakes. The fishing is available on a day ticket basis. Tel: 01305-849490.



## ARTS

It is not uncommon for an artist to remain not so much obscured by his peers as considered always in relation to them, one of the team. It is only when circumstances force it upon us that we see what should have been obvious all along. So it is with 70-year-old Leon Kossoff, whose first major retrospective is being held at the Tate. Here is a true and distinctive artist, of his time to be sure and conditioned by what and whom he has seen and known, but quite as much his own man as any, and to be seen in his own right.

When, some 30 years ago, Ronald Kitaj coined the term "the School of London", he clearly used it in an open and inclusive sense. "There are," he wrote, "ten or more people in this town, or not far away, of world class, including any friends of the abstract persuasion. In fact, I think there is a substantial School of London." Amen to that. But since then, others have narrowed the usage to mean but a handful of figurative and more or less expressionist painters - Bacon and Freud, Kitaj himself and the late Michael Andrews, Auerbach and Kossoff.

As a group it is interesting enough, if only for the evident disparateness of the artists' work rather than for any ground they might share. Kossoff alone has suffered by the constant, lax insistence upon a supposed association, most especially in relation to his long-time friend, Frank Auerbach, with whom he had sat in David Bomberg's life class at the Borough Polytechnic in the early 1950s.

But last year two things happened to bring him out of the others' shadows. First there was the Venice Biennale, at which he was the UK's principal representative and sole occupant of the British Pavilion. And then there was the *From London* exhibition, shown at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh and elsewhere, which brought that inner School-group of London together. Both events finally brought home the utter distinctiveness of Kossoff's work.

Now, with this Tate retrospective, we have the whole story, the whole picture, from the mid-50s when his essential method, material and subject-matter first established and resolved themselves, to the present and the deceptively easy mastery of the Spitalfields Church and Embankment Station series.

Kossoff marks himself out from the others at every point. He has nothing of the literary narrative of Kitaj, the gravity of Andrews, the intense objectivity of Freud, the cynical abstracted desperation of Bacon. To Auerbach, of course, he comes much closer, for they travelled much the same course together as young men, shared the same interests and the formative example and stimulus of Bomberg's teaching. But their very closeness now points their differences all the more starkly.

For Kossoff is a painter of place and personality, of mood and atmosphere, of a kind which Auerbach has never been. They both find their subjects in the immediate urban scene and in the life and portrait studio. Both work the painted surface in a dense and cluttered impasto, building up the image with a succession of intuitive strokes, overlays, recasts and repetitions. Both



A painter of place and personality, mood and atmosphere: 'Head of Rosalind', 1981, by Leon Kossoff

## A talent of his own

William Packer puts the record straight on Leon Kossoff

insist upon the stuff of the paint as at once a physical actuality and an image, that is to say a conjunction of space and form and light.

But where for Auerbach the interest lies finally in the formal structure and analysis that establishes an ideal image standing independent of its source, with Kossoff we are always with him by the railway-cutting, there in the burly-burly of swimming-pool or station concourse. In the studio, these are no reductive, idealised presences but people real and recognisable, for all that the paint is so thick and

the statement so desperate. Is it raining? Is the sun shining? These are questions we would ask only of Kossoff, or he of us. It is not a matter of better or worse, only of difference.

Hawkesmoor's great church of Christ Church, Spitalfields is the subject of an extended series that has occupied Kossoff these last ten years, and stands now as his cumulated masterpiece. Never, for all the denseness of his paint and his known earnestness of purpose, has he worked so lightly and with such command. In one of them, set one grey morning in 1990, a small, urgent figure in

blue scurries round the corner beside the church, and it is hardly fanciful to see it for once as an incidental self-portrait.

Whether it is or not, Kossoff's close presence in all his work, alike in the studio with his friends and models and out and about in the city, is undeniable, though it takes this retrospective overview to bring it out. Undetached, unironical, ever self-critical and full of doubt, the engagement is all.

Leon Kossoff: Tate Gallery, Millbank SW1, until September 1.

Opera/David Murray

## Linda and Iris revived

trary as the blessed recoveries. Few of us in the Queen Elizabeth Hall had heard *Linda* before, but it sounded excessively familiar. Donizetti's "semiseria" method was to go into his "dramma tragico" mode (as in *Lucia di Lammermoor*) for fraught junctures, whilst lacing them with plain, jolly numbers in Don Pasquale style. This hybrid defeats belief: all too clearly, we are listening to a professional craftsman applying his knacks in different and unrelated directions.

To be fair, London is the wrong place to put it on. *Linda* does get occasional revivals in provincial Italian houses, where audiences boast the native connoisseur's apprecia-

tion of singing (and care little about anything else). In these alien circumstances, all six of the Guildhall principals distinguished themselves: especially Sandra Zeltzer's precociously full-blooded and musically artful Linda, Wynne Evans as her glamorous tenor beau Carlo and Michael Dewis's ample, forceful baritone as Linda's heavy father. In lesser but no less jerry-built roles, Philip O'Brien was cheerfully effete as the Marchese who fails to seduce the virginal Linda. Emer McGiloway and Julian Sappe stamped pungent character upon their elders, and Jane Stevenson invested her androgynous *travesti* hurdy-gurdy player - yes! and symbolic, too - with plangent gravity.

There were too many small, deflating breaks, which might have been the fault of the conductor Clive Timms (though he had prepared the individual numbers brightly), or of Stephen Medcalf's parsimonious direction, or just first-night uncertainty. Francis O'Connor's sets were cute: a miniature Alp at either back corner, one topped by the Marchese's castle and the other pillared with mini-cottages.

Iris was the sixth of the 14-odd Mascagni operas that followed his first success, *Cavalleria rusticana*, but never equaled it. He lived long enough to become Mussolini's favoured official composer nonetheless. Between early triumph and fascist venerability,

however, his aesthetic pre-arranged D'Annunzio's notorious vein: sado-masochistic excitement over gross cruelty, especially in exotic and/or sadistic situations, in tandem with exacerbated mystical raptures. (Much like Puccini, his senior by five years; but Puccini died before Mussolini rose.)

Iris has all that. A fantasized Japan; an innocent girl at the mercy of brutes; expository apotheosis in a pit of torture. Mascagni was not shy of modernism, he tries on some "modern" harmonies and bold orchestration, though only for passing colours. Here he had a touching heroine in Hannah Francis, an anonymous but commanding geisha from Sidonie Winter, a ringingly accomplished tenor in Ian Storey (destined surely to succeed Dennis O'Neill as Best British Italian), and Peter Siddons's astringently funny broteler-master. Together in an honest staging, they might even have brought the thing off.

Off the wall/Antony Thorncroft

## Sites for sore eyes

ive art: Norman Adams has Chippendale period torches for up to £100,000; or books: Sam Fogg has the grandest Book of Hours to appear in years for £700,000. After satiation with all these glistening objects you can catch a special bus down to the people's fair at Olympia, open until Sunday evening, dropping off on the way at the International Ceramics Fair at the Park Lane Hotel.

Visiting Grosvenor House on Wednesday was Arthur Gilbert who has just given the nation its grandest present for decades - his silver, gold, mirror-mosaics and gold box collection acquired over the past 30 years. Gilbert, now 88, was British born but made his fortune in California real estate. He has been courted for

years by museums, but the promise of a good display in the vaults of Somerset House by Jacob Rothschild, chairman of the National Heritage Fund, clinched the gift.

The fund has given £15.5m of lottery money to finance the deal, which seems appropriate since an 18th-century national lottery had offices in Somerset House. And at last the government has agreed to move the civil servants out of one of the finest under-exploited 18th-century buildings in London. The treasure will go on show at the new silver gallery at the V&A in November, and move to Somerset House in 1998.

Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage, has acquired tunnel vision. He is still hopeful that a £250m tunnel will preserve the integrity of Stonehenge. He recently suggested that a tunnel hidden

alongside the river at Greenwich would solve the traffic congestion at this other key heritage site; and this week he came up with the idea of another Thames-side tunnel, to remove the ugly roadway approach to the Tower of London as it contemplates filling its moat with water.

In theory Sir Jocelyn's term as heritage supremo ends in April, but heritage secretary Virginia Bottomley has asked him to stay on, and, judging by his enthusiasm, he will. Having whipped English Heritage into shape he is now thinking globally about world heritage sites, which, nominally, are the creations of UNESCO.

He is currently arranging management plans for the ten world heritage sites on his patch, with Ironbridge this week following Hadrian's Wall in a consultation exercise; he has also announced that an

Television/Christopher Dunkley

## Down and out

At Channel 4 the producers probably believe that "Broke", their season on poverty in modern Britain, is a prime example of fulfilling their remit. Among other things this requires them to make programmes that "appeal to tastes and interests not generally catered for by ITV", and "encourage innovation and experiment", and to be "distinctive". The odd thing is that each new generation of programme makers seems to believe that there is something different and distinctive about programmes on poverty.

That said, it is, surely, greatly to television's credit that, in the half century of its existence, it has conveyed to more people a more graphic and detailed impression of what it means to be poor than were ever previously able to gather such ideas from Mayhew or government surveys or Dickens. Knowing is better than not knowing. Yet it is, perhaps, a telling reflection on the cynicism of our times that, despite such revelations from television, there has not only not been the upsurge of outrage, compassion and action against poverty which might have been expected by the Fabians and the left-wing idealists, but if anything there seems to have been a hardening of hearts.

Those who make series such as *Tales From The Wasteland* and *Postcards From The Edge* may imagine that it is impossible to sit in front of their programmes and not feel rage and sympathy for those living in damp council flats with esthetic children. Yet experience suggests that even quite soft hearted viewers tend to start muttering "I notice they all smoke... and drink... and find the money for the colour telly and the video recorder somehow... so this seems to be rather a special definition of poverty". Maybe such obsti-

nate reactions stem from a suspicion that the producers are a little too determined to tug our heart strings.

In the opening edition of *Tales From The Wasteland*, for instance, it was difficult not to feel for Steve who retired early from his job connected (we were never told precisely how) with mental health, on the advice that if he stayed he would be dead in 10 years, only to find his state benefit - which he and his wife Maureen had been paying for throughout their working lives - halved. With the help of the Citizens' Advice Bureau they just held off the bailiffs, and it

We may be watching the death throes of the welfare state

must have been an unusual viewer who did not feel some anger on their behalf. But it was difficult to feel the same way about Jimmy and Liz who, until the local law centre did the sums for them, seem to have had no idea that the loans they had taken out totalled £17,000; money they could not possibly repay after they both lost their jobs.

The different programme-making techniques used within the "Broke" season, with the opportunities for comparison they allow, suggest that if programme makers do want to engage our sympathies and project them directly onto individuals they are much more likely to succeed if, like Nick Danziger in *Postcards From The Edge*, they set out to make vivid rounded portraits rather than aiming for the sympathy jugular. Danziger's black-and-white still photo-

graphs are very striking, and his method (or perhaps that of producers Guy Davies and David Hart) of including himself in the television picture as he takes his photographs and asks questions is peculiarly effective.

It is impossible for the viewer to know whether it was really planned from the outset that all these programmes should be made for showing under a single umbrella title or whether the connections were spotted after they began to come in. These certainly seem no awareness in one set of programmes of what is being said in the others. On the other hand if you watch a lot of them, the cumulative effect is to make you realise that we really may be watching the death throes of the welfare state. That is the sort of event that calls out for the kind of political analysis to which print has always seemed better suited than television. Opinionated politics (other than in party political broadcasts) have been treated with kid gloves by British television, but *False Economy* in which Will Hutton gives a television version of his best selling book, *The State We're In*, is clearly highly opinionated.

It is a moot point whether his argument is better conveyed, as here, with a series of clips showing him addressing church meetings, university seminars, and so on, rather than the conventional approach with pieces to camera or voice-over. But his message certainly comes across and - whether good or bad economics - seems to be coherent enough and decidedly Blairite. No doubt there will be inquiries about when Channel 4 will be screening the balancing series expounding supply side economics, or whatever it is called these days. It would be fascinating to see how you prize asthma out of babies or dump out of council flats.

## Radio Pain and pleasure

Understood, well worth waking at sixish for words both familiar and new (Bejman, Donne, a vicar's bell-ringing wife) and a wide range of music (a wonderful Vaughan Williams setting of Housman, Hindu temple bells). Sheer pleasure, on a par with *Personal Obsessions*, the series that ended on Saturday with the young man in Edinburgh whose life is an adjunct of the Eurovision Song Competition and who, in the tones of Morningside, described conventions of like-minded fans playing the lesser-known numbers (good grief) from the great institution while he did his Katie Boyle act. Funny and oddly touching.

The week's other pleasures included Lord Jenkins of Hillhead talking about a referendum, or rather trying to pronounce it; excitedly enthusiastic Sarah Dunant, one of nature's earnest fifth-formers, confusing a line from *Macbeth* with *Oscar Wilde in A Good Read*; and a snatch of Pidgeon English ("fella gotta lotta rice") which suddenly clarified what Cilla Black has been speaking all her life. This came from *Tales From The Back of Beyond* and a programme about Bristol students seeking a monkey-faced bat with a five-

foot wing-span - not in Bristol, I hasten to add, but in the Solomon Islands.

This was considerably more efficient than the series' opening subject, the marvellously hilarious account of a youthful expedition to the Sahara led by the almost manically optimistic Mick. Narrow escapes included an inadvertent pee in a minefield and a girl called Coralle overturning the van and scraping the skin off a colleague's bottom. Early rumblings of discontent that the leader had not checked the van's roadworthiness were countered by his petulant reproaches at having to do all the work. When he casually mentioned, stranded in the middle of the Sahara, that the van's vendors had said it was not good on sand, I wondered if Alan Ayckbourn had had a hand in the affair. "I don't want you to be too pessimistic. There's no need to call the AA," Mick barked. As one of the group confided to us, "Mick had to wander off with tears in his eyes at one stage". The evident hope that he was doing a Captain Oates was dashed by his perky return.

Eventually they hit a sporadically-used railway and decided to load the defence van to it. The programme ended with them waiting for the train and receiving the news that through exceptional rain (yes, in the Sahara) the railway line had disintegrated. Mick mean-while evinced that mixture of maladroitness and self-righteousness that marks him out as a future manager in privatised utilities - or John Birt's BBC.

Martin Hoyle

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It is the most spectacular show in town - wonderfully preserved artefacts, ornately displayed; and that is just the customers. The objects at the Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair are equally dazzling.

The fair opened on Thursday and closes next Saturday. In recent years it has been criticised as elitist, a rich man's sweet shop. This is part of its charm. Everything looks expensive, from the dealers to the merchandise. There is the odd item for less than £100 but for many visitors the attraction is the £1m plus items - the rare Breguet the Younger "The Battle between Carnival and Lent" on Johnny van Haften's stand, priced at £1.5m; the Avercamp at Noortman with the same tag; a 2850,000 Canaletto capriccio painted in England on the Colnaghi stand, back at the fair after a four year gap.

And although dealers charge their strongest prices at Grosvenor House, at least the provenance and quality is spot on. Grosvenor House is how the British antiques trade likes to see itself - elegant, sophis-

ticated, replete with starry works of art.

Pictures are particularly strong this year. Richard Philip sold two thirds of his stock on preview day. Anyone slow to snap up another Bruegel, "The wedding feast", on Richard Green's stand can find the identical picture a few yards away at Van Haften. By a curious co-incidence both are priced at £650,000. And if you missed out on a memento of Jackie Onassis at the great Sotheby's extravaganza in New York, you can pick up a painting by Daubigny that graced her walls from Richard Green - although in two months the price will have edged up from \$118,000 to \$180,000.

There is no shortage of brown furniture: Hotspur has a cabinet commissioned from Robert Adam for the Hope-Thomas of Craggie Hall and priced at £350,000; or of decor-

ative art: Norman Adams has Chippendale period torches for up to £100,000; or books: Sam Fogg has the grandest Book of Hours to appear in years for £700,000. After satiation with all these glistening objects you can catch a special bus down to the people's fair at Olympia, open until Sunday evening, dropping off on the way at the International Ceramics Fair at the Park Lane Hotel.

Visiting Grosvenor House on Wednesday was Arthur Gilbert who has just given the nation its grandest present for decades - his silver, gold, mirror-mosaics and gold box collection acquired over the past 30 years. Gilbert, now 88, was British born but made his fortune in California real estate. He has been courted for



## ARTS/BOOKS

# Heywood finds a subtle winner

Penelope Fitzgerald is the appropriate recipient of a prize for 'bookmanship', writes Jackie Wullschlager

Controversy usually attends the announcement of any literary prize. It is the arrogant ascription of posterity - presuming to fix for the present reputations which only time can prove - which causes contention. But the winner of one of the newest literary awards, the £10,000 Heywood Hill Prize for a lifetime achievement in books, has provoked an uncharacteristic outburst of consensus.

Penelope Fitzgerald, author of exquisitely subtle historical novels such as *The Blue Flower* and *The Gate of Angels*, is one of our most loved writers. She received the award yesterday at a celebratory garden party at Chatsworth in Derbyshire, home of the Duke of Devonshire, who is one of the award's sponsors.

Named after a famously old-fashioned London bookseller, Heywood Hill in Curzon Street, the prize was created in 1994 after James Kelman, the Scottish 'dirty realist' novelist, won the Booker. "This is completely dotty. Why do they keep giving this prize for books no one wants to read?" wailed the late Jock Campbell, former chairman of Booker Brothers, to John Sumner-Smith, the bookseller's owner. In response, Sumner-Smith and the bookseller's main shareholder, the Duke of Devonshire, launched the Heywood Hill Prize, to honour "a lifetime's contribution to the enjoyment of books".

It has a secret shortlist; a jury of just three, headed by Sumner-Smith, to prevent factions; rejects commercial sponsorship (Parker

Pens offered, but Sumner-Smith did not want "the board turning up at Chatsworth"). Its patrician tone earned the award the sobriquet "the Tott's prize" in the tabloid press. On the political spectrum, it stands at the far end from other new awards, such as the women-only Orange Prize and the Saga Prize for writers "with a black African ancestor".

Key criteria, says Sumner-Smith, are "accessibility and readability, which today are seen by people like James Wood (former Booker judge and critic) not as virtues but as vices". In choosing Penelope Fitzgerald, it emerged that the judges - the others were Victoria Glendinning and Mark Amory - were all thinking of different, favourite books of hers... yet we were unanimous that as soon as she has written a new book, we all want to read it. The award was her broad body of work, ranging from acclaimed novels like *The Blue Flower* to a biography of Burne-Jones and a "brilliant" study of the poet Charlotte Mew, which "had probably sold about 500 copies".

One trend the award wishes to address is that all-round "bookmanship" is no longer prized in an age of niche marketing and 1990s specialism. In the lush garden of her Highgate grumpy flat, Penelope Fitzgerald remarks coolly that a prize for a lifetime's contribution is "compensation" for having been alive so long. She will be 80 this year, has won the Booker Prize once and been shortlisted three times, and takes this latest honour in her stride.

Does she enjoy writing? "No, it's horrible. Agony", she says indignantly. She started late, in her sixties, but "I'm inclined to think that everyone's got a certain number of quite good books in them, and it doesn't too much matter when you write them. I don't think authors should be called old or young, any more than they should be called men or women".

**Named after a famously old-fashioned bookseller, the prize was dreamt up when 'dirty realist' novelist James Kelman won the Booker**

She is as elusive as her books. Critics talk about their understated, compressed style, the wit and elegance, but it is hard to fix exactly what makes them so once so popular and so significant. *The Blue Flower*, due out in paperback this summer, tells of the Romantic German poet Novalis, his love affair with Sophie, a sweet, dim 12-year-old girl, and the reactions of their vast, eccentric families. Sophie died at 15 after hideous operations. Novalis at 28 from tuberculosis, and Fitzgerald constructs from this frag-

ment a profoundly moving and funny picture of what Romanticism means in everyday life.

On the whole it's not the sort of book I approve of - where you don't know if it's fact or fiction", says Fitzgerald. "But I didn't feel able to deal with Novalis factually." The spark for the story came in a church in Bonn, where she heard some of his hymns. "I thought it very sad, I can't put it more simply." The Romantics "are wonderful because they're total people. They believed there's one thing, and if you do it, everything will be all right. They will be done. It's gone downhill as an idea, it doesn't seem to work any more". Watching her darting eyes, strong, high cheekbones and mobile features as one sentence flowed gracefully after another, it occurred to me that not only does Penelope Fitzgerald cast distinction on the Heywood Hill Prize - she also embodies that unworldliness, mixed with a slightly *de haut en bas* tone, which it seeks to capture.

The unworldliness, she says, comes from her parents: "that's how people were in those days, truly feeling that money and so on don't matter". Her father, E.V. Knox, was editor of *Punch*, her mother was among the first students at Somerville. Writing, "children scribbling papers which adults paid a penny for" was the norm - "that in itself seems archaic beyond words". She still writes in pen and ink - "for the worldly motive that I can sell the manuscripts" - and has no agent. After a maverick career working in a theatre school, run-

ning a bookshop in Southwold, living on a Thames houseboat, she wrote a biography of Burne-Jones. Like her last, this first book was inspired by a moment in church - the memory of seeing as a child the Burne-Jones windows, "lovely for evensong, all reds and pinks", at Birmingham Cathedral, where her grandfather was bishop.

"That was my first idea of something beautiful - when you're little that's the same as feeling happy". A detective story, written to amuse her husband during his final illness, was followed by novels based on her own life, such as *Offshore* - about her barge - which won the Booker in 1978. Recently, with *The Beginning of Spring*, the story of an Englishman in Moscow in 1913, and *The Gate of Angels*, about a Cambridge scientist in 1911, she has been important - along with writers like Sebastian Faulks and Pat Barker - in bringing a new respectability to historical fiction.

The lightness of being, the effortless way period and place are breathed into reality so that her writing seems completely at ease with its historical content, does not mean these books are light. "You need clever readers", she says wryly. If she fits into a tradition, it is the European novella, where ideas are more readily expressed than in British fiction. *The Gate of Angels* and *The Blue Flower* are novels of ideas, touching on the possibility of knowledge, whether it helps us face life. Their heroes are what she calls "exterminates" - people who are defeated, I don't mean because they don't care, but



Penelope Fitzgerald: as elusive as her books

because they're not really constructed to cope with the world as it is."

Her attraction to such innocents, their reconciliation to their fate, makes me wonder if there is a religious theme here. "Yes, I'm a Christian. I feel ashamed because I think whatever you believe you ought to make very clear and I don't think I have done". Most readers would disagree. She has one of the most

forcefully original, but gently expressed, world views of any novelist working today. If the Heywood Hill Prize for a lifetime's achievement is an answer to the literary short-termism of our obsession with fat advances and bestseller positions, it could not have found a more appropriate recipient. If it would divest itself of its clubbiness, the award could become a significant cultural marker.

## The boys from Brazil

Antony Thornicroft reports on the forthcoming Minas Gerais festival

You can tell that Milton Nascimento is a great artist because he is so tortured. Sitting in his glass-bowl mountain syrie above Rio, with a magnificent view down to the sea, he carries the life of the world on his narrow shoulders. "It is artists who have the talks in their hand, so we must become the voice of the poor, who are speechless."

Such magnanimous thoughts often sound crass coming from men such as Nascimento, whose creativity is protected by armed guards, and whose talent earns fortunes. But Nascimento, Brazil's most famous musician, commands more credibility. A black ghetto orphan, he was fortunate to be adopted by white parents who took him to the interior state of Minas Gerais.

He has earned national respect by standing up, not only for the dispossessed, but for all Brazilians during the military dictatorship when he expressed on record, at a time when words were censored, the pain of the people in a penetrating scream of anguish in his celebrated falsetto. He does perform free concerts for the poor. He has created his own musical idiom - part jazz, part salsa, part fado, or, as he describes it - "the music of Milton".

He is popular enough internationally to persuade his new record company, Warner, to give him full creative control, the freedom to sing in any language he pleases. And when he comes to London next month for the Minas Gerais festival he will bring with him a choir of children rescued from the streets to perform his album *Amigo*, along with a similar choir from the Chicken Shed charity, at the Royal Albert Hall on July 10. This is a feel good music, composed with passion, but Milton will also deliver his hits.

Despite his Rio home, Nascimento is very much a son of Minas. "You leave Minas, but Minas does not leave you. As a

people, we are always trying to climb the mountains to reach the sea. We are surrounded by an echo."

This is tighty stuff for a Mineiran, who are famous for being reserved, contemplative, types. Not that this reticence will be on view at the Minas festival. Every two years Edna Copeland of Brazilian Contemporary Arts manages to do something remarkable - bring to London an artistic experience quite fresh to the most culturally satiated city in the world.

Two years ago it was the sounds and sights of Bahia; now it is Minas Gerais, a region much investigated by the British in the 19th century when its minerals - Minas Gerais translates rather prosaically into "General Mines" - provided many fortunes. Ties have weakened in recent years, but Minas is prospering again and while it is not as flashy as Rio, as busy as Sao Paulo or as exotic as Salvador, it does seem to be the power house of Brazilian cultural innovation.

From its capital Belo Horizonte comes Brazil's most acclaimed dance ensemble, Grupo Corpo, which will have the distinction of closing Sader's Wells: after its season from June 18-22 the Wells goes under wraps for its £30m renovation. Grupo Corpo gets most things right - the 18 dancers are classically trained, but choreographer Rodrigo Fedeirra makes sure they use their hips more, giving a greater physical performance than European dancers.

They will dance to Elgar - a cheeky version of "Enigma Variations" - and to Philip Glass. They will also introduce "21", a new work scored by Uakti, a trio of Mineiran musicians who will also be appearing in London, at Her Majesty's Theatre on June 23.

Uakti are predictable in drawing inspiration from the Amazonian Indians but most unusual in playing unique instruments created by their musical director, Marco



Milton Nascimento: a scream of anguish on behalf of the poor

Antonio Guimaraes, and including a glass marimba. Originally their instruments were untuned but when the professionals became interested - Uakti have recorded with Paul Simon and Stewart Copeland - Guimaraes accepted tuning as "an interesting change". Thirty instruments, mainly percussive, will come to London, and the concert is bound to attract both World Music and new music fans.

A characteristic of Mineiran art is the bizarre. Everything is slightly off kilter, not least singer Sylvia Klein, who is appearing at St John's Smith Square on July 1. She started as a punk rocker before deciding on a career as a diva. It is a tricky balancing act, as Nigel Kennedy discovered, but if her voice can match her dramatic looks - she was born to play Carmen - then London can be in at the start of a phenomenon. Her concert includes pre-

dictable art, as well as the music of Minas which, during its 18th-century gold-rush prime, spawned a brilliant, but now virtually unknown, musical tradition.

The same quirkiness is evident in the main theatre group on view, Grupo Galpao, which is presenting its version of *Romeo and Juliet*, neatly abridged to 90 minutes, in a marquee in Battersea Park. This is a rather restrictive venue for a troupe that usually plays in the streets, bringing a populist all sing-along, all dancing, *commedia del arte* approach to performance. Many of the actors have a circus background and anyone interested in Shakespeare on stilts is in for a fine time.

Throw in art shows, notably the restrained landscapes of the Minas mountains by Paul Bracher at the Cynthia Bourne Gallery; photographs; films; crafts; food; and seminars, and the virtually total British igno-

rance of Minas will be briefly dispelled.

These days the arts, especially on this costly scale, cannot be presented by altruistic patrons. Most of the expense of the festival is borne by FIEMG, the corporate organisation which in Brazil undertakes many of the educational, medical and cultural functions provided by Governments in Europe. FIEMG's Minas president Stefan Silje is quite specific: he is using the arts of his region as a calling card for business.

In particular he hopes that the festival will alert British gas companies and universities to commercial opportunities in Minas. For him the seminars, and the opportunities to entertain potential investors, are as important as the experiences on stage. For audiences, however, the Minas festival proves an unrepeatable opportunity to experience a culture which uniquely blends isolationism and tradition, with a modern Latin cosmopolitanism. With so much of the London arts scene driven by cheap nostalgia and phoney fashion, this is an exciting prospect.

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## Theatre

## Jude - more obscure

First of all let us agree that there is nothing wrong in principle with the idea of adapting classic novels for stage. As Mike Alfreds, adaptor and director of Method & Madness's *Jude the Obscure* pointed out on these pages, the classic novel often tells a very good yarn. And, if sensitively done, a stage adaptation can complement the novel, retelling the story in theatrical language and even revealing new insights. It can excite the interest of someone who has not read the book, and revive the affection of someone who has.

At their worst however, adaptations can do untold damage. Staging can simplify a book, reduce its scope or mutilate the author's voice. And it has to be said that Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* does not fare well in the transition on this occasion.

There are plenty of good things about the production. Alfreds could by no means be accused of prettifying the story and there is none of that Mummer's mumbling and flying scenery that can make a stage Hardy look like a theme park. The production uses just four actors, a few bare boards and a great deal of passion. The plot is stripped down to the bare essentials - the thwarted attempts of Jude to acquire learning and better himself, and his tangled relationships with two women, the acquisitive Arabella and the danger-

ously fascinating Sue.

The piece operates as a quartet between these three and Phillotson, Sue's dull teacher husband, with any other parts being picked up by the cast. All four are on stage all the time, suggesting the watchful presence of a mean-minded society and the fact that the stage is empty but for a huge mobile wooden door and window that whisk around to change scenes, keeps the production fluid. Meanwhile the spartan nature of the set and the cast's black garb convey the air of doom that pervades the novel.

But the main problem with the production is that distilling the plot to a few hours' traffic on stage does Hardy no favours at all. Any plot taken at a trot can turn into farce, and this one becomes quite ludicrous. Rather than focus on a few episodes, Alfreds does the whole thing at a jog: great swathes of the book are summed up in a sentence, which makes for unsatisfying drama. The push-me-pull-you relationship between Jude and Sue, already pretty intense in the book, becomes ridiculous, with the characters careering back and forth like bumper cars.

Performers have to turn on a sixpence to convey their characters. Jude fares relatively well, Martin Marquez's pensive but solid presence lending him dignity, while Simon Robson

makes a good list of the thankless role of the charisma-free Phillotson. Abigail Thaw brings a great deal of vitality to the pragmatic Arabella. It is Sue who comes out worst. From the irresolute and inconsistent woman in the book, who irritates you because of her inconsiderate use of Jude, but gains your compassion because of her genuine struggles to forge her own values, she boils down into a petulant, hysterical screwball who simply infuriates you. Geraldine Alexander has great charm and a winning delicacy, but her performance is so mannered in places that it grates terribly and she cannot carry off the wildly vacillating behaviour of her character.

None of this is helped either by the introduction of highly-charged music at the flash points which only adds to the impression of melodrama. And while the production is good on atmosphere, it struggles to convey the context of Jude's experiences: the arguments that Hardy considers about free will, fate and social forces. In the end this bald version of the story demonstrates a dangerous lack of understanding of the novel's uncomfortable balance between two stools - it is not the book and neither is it good theatre.

Sarah Hemmings

Continues at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith London W6 (0181-741 2311).

## Tragic love triangle

Alastair Macaulay on a rare production of 'Berenice'

Racine, the most classical dramatist of the modern era, is also supremely psychological. Few playwrights match him in showing characters changing their minds; he shows us heroes and heroines fighting against their destiny or against their desires, like fish thrashing at the end of a line. And, in *Berenice*, Racine reduces classical tragedy to its most dazzling simplicity. No death occurs here to provide any climax to events. The tragedy is that life must continue.

In Shakespeare, we love the breadth of his vision and the range of his language. In Racine, the opposite is true. Not even in Sophocles is classical drama more simple. Titus, emperor of Rome, loves the eastern queen Berenice; and she loves him. But Roman tradition will not allow him to make her his wife, and, his heart breaking, he sends her, her heart breaking away. Both of them consider death, but they recognise that they must live.

Racine adds one supreme complication with the character of Antiochus, another eastern monarch, a trusted friend of Titus. Antiochus is also secretly in love with Berenice, and hopes that, if Titus sends her away, she may be free to love him. Titus, unknowing, uses Antiochus to break the news to Berenice that he, Titus, cannot marry her. The triangle is such that the three

rulers keeps misunderstanding each other, until, finally, Titus and Berenice express themselves clearly to each other. Antiochus is present; and it is he who ends the play with the single word "Hélas!"

Racine is, I have often thought, the least translatable writer since Horace, and the extreme simplicity of *Berenice* may explain why translators have avoided it more than the more plot-ridden *Phaedra* and *Andromaque*. It is seldom seen in Britain - the last London staging was at the National Theatre in 1990 - but it is among the greatest of all plays.

Whereas the National's staging was spelt by a new rhyming version by Neil Bartlett, the new production at the tiny Man in the Moon Theatre uses the older, blank verse translation by David Cairns. (This fact is, disgracefully, unmentioned in the programme.) Cairns catches enough of the play's austere intensity to hold the attention of a Chelsea audience. Lisa Clarke directs and the play runs, with no interval, at just over an hour and a half. The limited stage space works well, with orange curtains suggesting the areas of Berenice's private rooms offstage. Designer Aileen Malone puts everyone into simple modern dress suggestions of classical attire.

Each of the leading three actors has a different part of the

right style. As Titus, Lee Warner has polish, elegance, intensity; but nothing seems really to come from the gut. He employs a charming supply of "period" gestures, but these are rendered superficial by the tension of his shoulders and stance. Simon Ford, as Antiochus, is the opposite: often too understated, but with a stillness, a concentration on his colleagues, and an occasional swell of feeling within the formality of his lines, that are nobly eloquent.

As Berenice, Julia Stubbs has too little notion of nobility, and has no grandeur of bearing, but everything about her is heartfelt, sure, spontaneous. While Warner stands prettily running through two dozen different gestures to illustrate Titus's response to her distress, she is bent right down on the floor, wracked, sobbing, speaking in dark vocal tones that are compelling. Since she normally speaks with a certain hush, such passages of violent emotion are all the more striking. I reviewed this actress, glowingly, in *A Doll's House* earlier this year, and it is she who most brings Racine to life on this occasion. (Porter Over also does well by Titus's confident Paulinus.) It is odd to find Racine's classicism in a pub theatre at World's End, but I record that this production held its audience from first to last.

At the Man in the Moon Theatre, SW7, until June 29.

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## BOOKS

# Sharp eye of a deconstructionist

These 'gargoyle-genre' exposés makes voyeurs of us all, writes Jackie Wullschlager

Welcome to the purloined clinic – a vast 19th-century operating amphitheatre where a surgeon, scalpel in hand, fingers shining with blood, pauses to stare at his assistants as they work on a deep, bleeding incision in the thigh bone of a patient.

This scene, a masterpiece of American realism, was painted in 1875 by Thomas Eakins. It is "purloined" by Janet Malcolm to become part of the story of her critical coming of age, in which a review denying the painting's realistic credentials "caused me to see that I had been thinking like a deconstructionist for a long time without knowing it," like Mallarmé's M. Jourdain, who discovered that he had been speaking in prose all his life.

Everything that one loves and despairs of in Janet Malcolm's work is present in this short piece.

The mesmeric, gory detail that transports you to another world. The moral edge – Malcolm's jolly admission that she has stolen the painting. The moment of understanding, where a sudden glance, a tiny phrase, illuminates a new way of thinking. And then the maddening, earnest vanity of the critic, fancying herself as a Mallarmé character or a surgeon with a scalpel, dissecting late-20th century culture why can't she ever forget her own East coast, sophisticated cleverness?

In a former age, Malcolm would have been a novelist. She once edited a humorous magazine called *Gargoyle*, and for 20 years her reputation at *The New Yorker* has rested

on a series of brilliantly disconcerting portraits of certain larger-than-life, flamboyant figures whose achievements and oddities speak for the spirit of our age: contemporary gargoyles. She also likened a whole cast of biographers to burglars making off with the family silver in her book about Sylvia Plath and modern biography, *The Silent Woman*.

What makes Malcolm one of our most enjoyable writers, rather than a head-in-the-clouds philosopher, is her method, which is to deconstruct a world – psychoanalysis, journalism – while conveying at the same time the thrill and horror of it. The triple genre here are three little-known examples of

her gargoyle-genre, all unputdownable. In "The One-Way Mirror", Salvador Minuchin, pioneer of family therapy, sets to work on a hapless family. Another surgeon-with-scalpel.

**THE PURLOINED CLINIC: SELECTED WRITINGS by Janet Malcolm**  
Penguin £12, 382 pages

pej, Minuchin chatters about his brilliance, darts out like Hamlet among the players to wreak havoc with his clients ("Attack the mother!"), while Malcolm quietly points up his failures and foibles. In "A Girl of the Zeitgeist" the

Manhattan art world falls for the same trick. In "The Window Washer", a valuable Czech dissident called Daniel Krummrich pours out his fantasies and bitterness about life after the velvet revolution.

The wit lies in the contrast between Malcolm's cautions, tight-rope-modulated tone and the screaming monologues of her subjects. Almost everyone she has interviewed has later cursed himself for talking too much. Her records of these conversations suggest that in the flesh she has the inviting stillness of a good shrink. On the page, on the other hand, she can manifest the tone of psychoanalysis at its most self-righteous.

Her window-washer, gripping that Kundera's novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* glorified his profession – "It is very upsetting to meet Americans and when you tell them what you do they give you a lecherous look" – is made to look like a naïf who cannot tell fiction from reality. The subtext reads: Malcolm's poise versus her subject's clumsy honesty.

The magnificence of these exposés is that they make voyeurs of all of us. Leave Malcolm in the library, and the result is smart but harmless – her look here at Freud's Dora case, for instance. Ask her into the kitchen, the consulting room, the gallery opening, and you have a deadly presence whose deconstructionist eye might alight anywhere – expensive chocolates in New York, cheap ice cream in Prague – to fix the flavour of the Zeitgeist.

In her first book, *Diana and Nikon*, Malcolm admired "the camera's profound misanthropy... its preference for precisely those facets of our own nature that we most wish to disown". She now works like a misanthropic photographer herself. The results are riveting, the danger is that they seduce us into thinking that her pessimistic vision ("the camera never lies") is the only way of looking at life. I laughed and writhed at her ridiculous, odd, vain subjects – but I could not help feeling, at least they had passion, faith, creativity, rather than Malcolm's compulsion to destroy through analysis. *The Purloined Clinic* is an amusing, reader-friendly form of deconstructionism, but it still begs the question that never leaves this sort of criticism alone: so what?

## Kouroi, cults and powerful enchantments

Brian Sewell on a book which attempts to restore Greek sculpture to its wider cultural context

"It has been established elsewhere in this book that we really know very little about the sculptors of Classical Athens... we know even less about the sculptors of Pergamon."

A challenging claim, but true. This small book – a compilation of revised lectures, perhaps, with odd chuckle-notes to lighten the load of scholarship – changes pace in the second half, and is best read in reverse if the weightier arguments of the earlier chapters are to be fully grasped. Wagging his tail (and he is something of a wag), Spivey deals succinctly with such vast monuments as the Parthenon in Athens, the Great Altar of Pergamon and the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus (though here a reconstruction, even as preposterous as all the others, would have helped), and is enlightening, even entertaining, in his treatment of such celebrated, influential and (through copies) commonplace statues as the Laocoön, the Dying Gaul (not Gallic, but Galatian) and the erotic Aphrodite of Knidos – all neatly packaged for reference in the later chapters; the early burden of the book, however, is of a different character, both plodding and elementary: introduction to the first year student, and an affront of educational iconoclasm to those for whom the encrusted traditions of classical scholarship must for ever be inviolable. It is not unreasonable to suppose that many readers, until now comfortable with the complacency of received knowledge, will, having read Spivey with diligence, never again accept without question and misgiving, any assertion made by scholars of the past; we have all long known that Winckelmann was a misleading ass, but now it seems that asses have been legion ever since.

The elementary business of the transition from marble to bronze, and the consequent use of more expensive poses as hollow casting was developed, is considered, and so too is the possible influence of technical

changes in vase painting, as well as a growing aesthetic demand for realism and like. The development from the stark simplicity of very early kouroi is no longer to be explained as reflecting the change in Greek politics from despotism to democracy (an explanation as foolish as attributing Italian Mannerism to the Sack of Rome in 1527), but as a much more complicated matter – partly of what Gombrich called "Pygmalion Power," partly reflecting cults of male beauty and the investment of such beauty with moral overtones (the limping hunchback could never be a hero), the tie to Apollo as the divine aspect of the young male (one of many incidental

**UNDERSTANDING GREEK SCULPTURE**  
by Nigel Spivey  
Thames & Hudson £26, 240 pages

parallels with Christianity) and the development of the ideal canon of a male beauty beyond realism, symmetry taking the male body away from flesh and into the realm of the spirit – Canova's giant Napoleon the last kouroi of them all! Spivey deals with Daedalus and the origins of sculpture, with its development from carved plank or trunk to soft limestone, to hard marble, to quarrying and tools, to terracotta modelling, and to mechanical statues in Alexandrian carnivals and polychromy – "no nation ever exhibited a greater passion for gaudy colours," waxed and oiled against the weather. He touches on boy-flogging contests in Sparta, on votive statues of repentance donated by athletes who have cheated, on other votive figures that assist our understanding of antique society, pleading for illness to be blessed – the opposite extreme to the gigantic Zeus at Olympia, made by Pheidias in ivory, ebony and gold, a Wonder of the ancient world. He does not, alas, deal with the sculptor's references to the nude model, yet only 20 years

ago there were still undisturbed pockets of population on Turkey's southern coast where the musculature of many a young man's torso was as symmetrically defined as that of any kouroi; nor does he consider the necessity of drawing – was that perhaps superfluous when men's memories were so much better charged than now?

From heroes, heroic nudity, the concept of beautiful death (and ugly "heroisation"), Spivey leads us to the Riace bronzes, ties them to the Marathon Monument, and develops his thesis on the Parthenon, warning us that no interpretation is free from problems. Pheidias, it seems, had nothing to do with sculpting the Parthenon frieze, and once the temple was completed the Elgin Marbles were not again visible until the roof was off and the set in.

One small matter: the Knidians moved Knidos from Datpa to the end of the peninsula in order to exploit the profit from providing a safe harbour for small coast-hugging vessels as they turned the point to cross the channel north to Halicarnassus, where both weather and water can offer the most abrupt and hostile change. The presence there of a new cult statue of Aphrodite of such stimulating beauty that it bore the stains of semen, must have been less an object of piety than another form of profitable exploitation, the tale of the boy who committed suicide after ejaculating over her marble buttocks probably an advertising myth. Spivey here offers fascinating insights on the Greek taste for bottoms quivering like jelly. Archaeology, as Spivey points out in his Epilogue, constantly yields new evidence, and we must thus test and retest the fraudulent history of Greek art invented by Winckelmann that still taints our scholarship. With this attempt to restore Greek sculpture to its wider cultural context, we are persuaded not merely to stand in awe of it, but, as did the ancients, to enjoy its powerful enchantments, aesthetic, erotic and ideal.



Re-creating the fraudulent history of Greek art: Aphrodite, the Venus de Milo, c.100 BC

## The great caveman mystery

Roy Terry admires an attempt to unravel the fate of Neandertal Man

In 1968, I held in my hands the fossilised head of a child who lived 2m years ago and was a forebear of modern humankind. "This is our earliest relative," said Professor Raymond Dart, who had discovered the fossil 34 years earlier in a limestone quarry at Taung, South Africa. I stroked the precious skull of *Australopithecus africanus* for a few precious moments before it was returned to the Witwatersrand medical school.

This encounter set me on the trail of famous fossils, travelling first to Makapansgat, in the Northern Transvaal, where other *Australopithecine* fossils had been discovered. There, Dart showed me a collection of hand axes and other implements he claimed these crea-

tures had fashioned from stones and bones. Above us, a more recent artefact, the Soviet Sputnik, was traversing the starry African skies.

Since then, I have been to Tanzania to see what is now believed was one of the first tool-makers, *Homo habilis* (Gandy Man), and to Kenya, where I met its discoverers, Louis and Mary Leakey: to Washington to inspect the plaster casts of Peking Man (*Homo erectus*); and to Berkeley, California, where a team of biologists, led by Allan Wilson,

was tracing the ancestry of human beings back to a single woman, Eve as she was dubbed, who lived in Africa 200,000 years ago.

These were all staging posts on a possible time line stretching from the ape-like *Australopithecus*, (whose earliest known example is a 4m-year-old skeleton, Lucy, discovered in the mid-1970s in the remote Afar triangle in Ethiopia), to ourselves – *Homo sapiens*.

Lurking somewhere on the fringe of this evolutionary procession is the stooped figure of Neandertal Man. He is the original caveman, but of cartoonists who depict him as a hulking brute, chinless and beetle-browed wielding his heavy club and dragging his Neandertal by the hair. The first Neandertal fossil was discovered by accident in a cave in the Neander valley near Düsseldorf in 1856.

"If at that moment Neandertal Man could have foreseen the troubled future for him, he would have scrambled back into the cave and reburied himself forever," writes James Shreeve. "Ever since, the Neandertals have been tossed

back and forth by scientific opinion, now in our ancestry, now out, first too brutish to be seen as ancestral to noble man, later too noble to be indicted by our brutality, only to be brought back for further questioning and slapped with the original charge."

The fate of the Neandertals is one of the greatest mysteries in the story of evolution, matching that of the original fossils of Peking Man, which

**THE NEANDERTAL ENIGMA: SOLVING THE MYSTERY OF MODERN HUMAN ORIGINS**  
by James Shreeve  
Fitting £18, 369 pages

were lost during the Japanese conquest of China in 1941. We know that the Neandertals – whose brains were actually larger than those of modern human beings – lived in Europe, north Africa and Asia between 120,000 to 30,000 years ago. Then, at the height of their development, they vanished.

What happened to them is the subject of heated debate.

Chris Stringer, of the British Natural History Museum, leader of the out-of-Africa theorists, is adamant that they were unable to compete with and were superseded by the taller, thinner, long-legged Cro-Magnons, a name borrowed from a tiny rock shelter in southern France where, in 1868, skeletons resembling modern people were first discovered.

Wilford Wolf, of the University of Michigan, vehemently opposes the Stringer school. He and his followers, known as the multiregionalists, scoff at the idea of Wilson's African Eve, claiming that after *Homo erectus* human populations progressed along the same route, with no splinter groups, towards modern people. Therefore the Neandertals were our ancestors and their genes are within us all.

In his survey of the evolutionary procession, James Shreeve, an advisory editor at *Discover* magazine, distils all the facts scientists have gathered about our origins and explores the variety of theories on the subject. He takes us to the laboratories and work-

benches of geneticists, biologists, palaeo-anthropologists and archaeologists, and evaluates their arguments clearly and concisely.

He makes a forceful case for the Neandertals to be regarded as a separate species not unlike modern human beings. It supports the contention by the American anatomists William Straus and A.J.E. Cave, that given a bath, a shave, and modern clothing it is doubtful whether Neandertal would attract any more attention on the New York subway than some of its other denizens.

So why did they disappear? Shreeve contends that they did not necessarily fall as a race nor were they deliberately wiped out by a superior species. It was just that success eluded them more often than it did their Cro-Magnon competitors. In the words of Stringer, the Neandertals probably went out with a whimper, not a bang. It is an interesting theory which awaits much more firm evidence if it is to stand up.

Shreeve's fascinating book neatly sums up what is known about the origins of man. In the end, though, Neandertal remains just as much an enigma as he always was and probably always will be, despite Shreeve's valiant attempt to humanise him and unravel his fate.

## Rereadings

## Real-life cold blood

Truman Capote once asked fellow novelist Edmund White if he ever reread his own books: "I do. Every year I reread *In Cold Blood*. I don't mean to. I just pick it up and quickly become engrossed. I don't remember any of it. It's as though someone else wrote it. It's entrancing."

*In Cold Blood* was published 30 years ago, following a dogged six-year investigation by Capote of the killing, in 1959, of a wealthy Kansas farmer named Clutter, his wife and two teenage children by two young ne'er-do-wells who were eventually hanged for their crime.

Its publication stirred a rattlesnake's nest. Capote was attacked by mealy-mouths for poking about so energetically in a real-life crime. The mealy-mouths wittingly challenged his "ethics". Other critics, on the other hand, greeted *In Cold Blood* as a classic of journalistic investigation written with beautiful limpidity of style and as artfully constructed as a prize novel. Capote himself, misleadingly, dubbed it a "non-fiction novel".

"Writers," wrote Capote many years later, "at least those who take genuine risks... have a lot in common with another breed of lonely men – the guys [high-stakes gamblers] who make a living shooting pool and dealing cards." Many people, he said, thought he had been crazy to gamble six years researching *In Cold Blood*. "Others rejected my whole concept of the 'non-fiction novel' and pronounced it unworthy of a 'serious' writer, Norman Mailer described it as a 'failure of imagination' – meaning, I assume, that a novelist should be writing about something imaginary rather than about something real."

However, the critics who complained that "non-fiction novel" was a catch phrase did so justifiably. *In Cold Blood* is not a novel. Nor are fiction, whereas *In Cold Blood*, which was based on official records, numerous interviews with named witnesses and Capote's own all-seeing eye, is an outstanding example of book-length journalism.

Indeed, it was held to have been one of the books that inspired the "new journalism" – investigative, irreverent, aggressively nonconformist – of the late 1960s and 1970s. Although Capote admired Mailer, he could not resist claiming, in later years, that Mailer had "made a lot of money and won a lot of prizes writing non-fiction novels (*The American Dream*, *The Executioner's Song*) although he has always been careful never to describe them as 'non-fiction' books."

Unfortunately, book-length journalism of the quality of *In Cold Blood* (or *The Executioner's Song*) has almost nothing to do with late 1990s newspaper journalism, which, harried by the gathering challenge of electronic news and data transmission, and by other developments in cyberspace, seems to be running for cover – if not entering a dark age of shivering retrenchment.

Yet I am enough of a raggedy old hack to imagine that today's dead-trees newspapers will one day negotiate their vale of tears and emerge, by around 2020, slimmer (much), wiser (lots), and ready to defend

themselves by hiring some of the best journalistic talent money can buy. If that proves to be the case, young journalists, looking for inspiration, will be jostling into bookshops (yes, bookshops) to buy *In Cold Blood* well into the 21st century.

Its skilled construction and masterly pacing are of little relevance to journalists writing 3,000- or even 10,000-word pieces. But they can learn an awful lot by studying its style – it could have been written yesterday – as well as the way Capote uses high-calibre direct quotes to establish his cast of characters swiftly and vividly, and to create narrational excitement and momentum.

Except towards the end of his career, Capote kept his love of neat pretty well out of his books, though it peeps through whenever the Clutters' killers are strutting about on-page, and is evident in the chisel-work of several key descriptive passages. Perry

Smith, one of the killers, "seemed a more than normal-sized man (when sitting)... with the shoulders, the arms, the thick, crouching torso of a weight-lifter... But some sections of him were not in proportion to others... When he stood up, he was no taller than a 12-year-old child, and suddenly looked... like a retired jockey, overblown and muscle-bound."

In contrast, Dick Hickock, the other killer, a lady's man where Smith was not, seemed, when clothed, to be a "timid, dingy-blond youth of medium height, fleshless and perhaps sunken-chested". But disrobed, Hickock was "an athlete constructed on a welterweight scale", with an "inky gallery" of tattoos – a cat's face, a blue rose, the head of a dragon, bosomy nudes, a grinning – on his arms, shoulders and body.

In his preface to *Musée de l'Homme*, Capote opined that "most writers, even the best, over-write. I prefer to underwrite. Simple, clear as a country creek." He also warned against too much density: taking three pages to arrive at effects that could be achieved in a paragraph. And he said he had been wrong to leave himself – the reporter – completely out of the picture in *In Cold Blood*. The reporter, Capote had now decided, belonged in the picture. Otherwise he was telling only half the story.

Those hoping for a career in journalism in the first years of the 21st century needn't bother studying today's newspapers. They should read Capote instead. Then Mailer. Then Nicholas Tomalin. And take it along from there.

Michael Thompson-Noel

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## BOOKS

# From mantra to murder

William Dawkins on the extraordinary rise of the doomsday cult which lead to the nerve gas attack on Tokyo's subway

We should all shudder at the spectacle of the Asahara cult, the Japanese prophet of Armageddon now facing a murder trial for last year's nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway.

This is the first English language book to make sense of the complex background to Asahara's doomsday cult, Aum Shinrikyo - and it proves to be a deeply disturbing story. The cult at the end of the world demonstrates that the tragedy was predictable, even avoidable. The attack was well advertised in advance, by the perpetrators themselves in the form of handbills dished out on Ginza street-corners and by an exchange of messages on the Internet, and prepared over years under the noses of police and intelligence forces in six countries.

The authors, an expert on Japanese gangsters and the Esquire magazine journalist who predicted the subway attack, explain how the cult grew with extraordinary speed in the grass roots of a disoriented Japan, and was largely ignored by a Japanese police force ill-prepared for the unexpected.

Aum was part of a "divine traffic jam," of hundreds of alternative religions all claiming to offer young Japanese a new dimension to lives seen as rich in cash and technology, but lacking in soul.

Unlike other Japanese cults, however, this one acted on its grudge against what it saw as a decadent society. It spread to Russia and Germany, equally promising environments for alternative cults, and then embarked on an international shopping spree from Russia to the US, Switzerland and Australia for biological, chemical and nuclear weapons, uranium ore and electronic components. The social background to Aum, an unlikely mix of Buddhism, Hinduism and Old Testament Christianity, has been much talked about already. Refreshingly, the book keeps preaching to a minimum and concentrates on telling a story which happens to be extraordinary enough to speak for itself.

The authors reveal just how Aum managed to pull in 40,000 young people, many of them alumni of Japan's top universities, relieve them of \$1bn in property and savings and persuade them to wage a high-technology war on the state. Followers believed, with help from mind-bending techniques such as starvation followed by banquets of hypnotic drugs, that they were to be the first citizens of a utopian world run by a mystic monk-emperor, a parody of Japan's own early Buddhist priest Emperors.

At the start of his career, Asahara, the purblind son of a Tatum mat weaver, was more small-time entrepreneur than

**THE CULT AT THE END OF THE WORLD**  
by David Kaplan and Andrew Marshall  
Hutchinson £16.99, 310 pages

Emperor. In the late 1970s, he opened an acupuncture clinic in the Tokyo suburbs but soon fell foul of the law for selling quack remedies.

But Asahara made enough money to visit the Himalayas on a soul-searching tour in early 1980s. One local priest there was astonished to be lectured on religious training by the tubby Japanese tourist, who then threw his arms round the priest's shoulders and demanded a joint photograph.

It was on Asahara's return to Tokyo that the cult started to grow from a small nucleus of admirers. By borrowing from Japanese comic books and US science fiction, Asahara shifted his quack remedies to a high-tech dimension. The cult's uniform included an electronic cap, a web of electrodes - a mere \$70,000 to initiate - used to tune the wearer's brain into the master, and Aum's research moved from mantras to the laboratory.

Some of it remained distinctly Gothic. Initiates were offered a glass of the master's blood - \$7,000 a shot - and female followers were invited to share Asahara's imperial sized bath tub, another opportunity to absorb bodily fluids



An unholly mix of Buddhism, Hinduism and Old Testament Christianity: Shoko Asahara, founder of the Aum Shinrikyo cult

held to have magical properties, but this time for free.

Not everyone was gullible. Asahara's attempt to get into national politics was flop. In a wonderful bit of black comedy, the book adds how followers tried to drug and then hypnotise an entire Russian orchestra, hired to come to Tokyo to perform a "peace concert" for the cult. The doctored musicians proved more resilient than expected and staged a midnight escape from the cult's headquarters on the slopes of Mount Fuji.

Despite such small setbacks, the cash flowed in fast and Aum was able to buy engineering and computer companies, from which it drained more

cash. Asahara's desire to purge a society which he felt had rejected him continued to grow and he equipped himself accordingly.

By the early 1990s, the cult's arsenal included the largest single supply of nerve gases outside Iraq, an automatic rifle making plant, a rudimentary military laser beam and electro magnetic gun, and a military helicopter.

In several cases, allege the authors, US and Japanese authorities were warned by suppliers suspicious of Aum's motives, but did not act. Most shocking of all are the blunders of the Japanese police. They did nothing after Aum launched a trial gas attack on

the town of Matsumoto in mid 1994 and failed to spot a multitude of subsequent clues.

When the police finally did get round to planning a mass raid on Aum facilities across Japan, in January last year, they botched it. The Osaka police failed to consult colleagues in Tokyo and moved in on a local Aum office a day before a raid was planned on the headquarters in the capital. Robbed of the element of surprise, a despairing Tokyo metropolitan police postponed the operation. Tragically, it was during that delay that Aum hit the subway.

It could easily have been worse. The cult wasted much time and money developing

weapons that turned out to be useless. It destroyed many tons of nerve gas as soon as it suspected that the slow wits of the police were stirring. Aum even launched three earlier gas attacks on Tokyo, of which two failed because equipment broke down and the third because a conscience-stricken sect follower replaced solution of the nerve gas with water at the last moment.

Aum would have had to be only slightly more disciplined to bring off a massacre of thousands. What could a cooler-headed terrorist have achieved with a simple biotechnology kit? That problem, concludes the book, simply must be addressed.

Fiction/Brian Martin

# Life, death family and childhood

Robert McCrum's *Suspicion* is the accomplished contemporary equivalent of a medieval morality tale. Julian Whyte, a bachelor, provincial district corner, finds life disturbed by the arrival in his village of his elder brother, Raymond, and his wife, Kristina, disillusioned communists from the former GDR. The core of the book concerns Julian's falling in love with the enigmatic, moody Kristina. "You are seducing your brother's wife," she archly points out. "That is a sin."

The tale, full of problems and surprises, is told in a meticulous, analytical corner's style. More than anything Julian is used to death: "My colleague Death", and "I meet Death on a regular basis". Even Raymond's new house has "dark cypresses lining the short drive", and as "the tall black sentinel" of a grandfather clock is moved in, Raymond remarks, "For a moment I thought you were showing me my coffin".

McCrums' writing is distinguished by insinuating intelligence and filled with subtle ironies. Close to Raymond's house "a cuckoo sounded in the tree" and, a little further away, Brighton "like a Regency tart... was getting ready for another hectic season".

His nicely paced narrative is philosophical. He quotes Conrad on transgression, which enters a man's existence and "like a malign growth, consumes it like a fever". Besides Conrad in this clever, humane novel, aperçus derive from considering Shakespeare and Keats, and Suskind's novel *Peregrine* helps to inform about one character.

*The Orchard on Fire* is similarly set in the provinces, in the village of Stonebridge where the Harlequin family has migrated from Stratham to run the Copper Kettle tearoom. It describes by reminiscence the experiences of eight-year-old April in 1982. Coronation year. She establishes her life's most important friendship with Ruby, the daughter of a violent local politician.

At the end, we are reminded of the publican's violence against Ruby and her mother's complicity in the abuse. McKay leaves us in no doubt that their crime "is that they were given a work of art and they treated it as if it was worthless".

The year 1952 is also when Moon takes place, and it concerns an eight-year-old, Philip, an English boy brought up on a Kenyan farm during the Mau-Mau terror. Gavron's middle-aged narrator recalls his childhood experiences during which his closest companion and confidant was Ernest, his father's African driver.

Philip's disillusioned father, in a Polonius role, gives

depressing advice to his small son: "All you can be sure of in your life is that people will let you down." This cynicism is countered by the novel's powerful, convincing flash when Ernest's adopted son, Philip's half-brother, explains his people's view of personal relationships: "We do not distinguish between our children and our brother's children." *Moon* is a vividly written, sympathetic, impressive first novel.

*A Perfect Execution* shares preoccupations with *Suspicion* and reminds the reader of *The Remonger's Tragedy* - "I see now that there is nothing sure in mortality but mortality" - and of Abhorson's insistence in *Measure for Measure* that hanging is "a mystery".

Jem Beumbo, whose professional name as an executioner is Solomon Straw, works during the last years of capital punishment: there is more than a hint of Albert Pierrepoint about him. He is concerned about his victims and has learned from his mentor, "Study chess, Solomon. Learn its patience, and its skill but above all learn its capacity for sudden, swift execution."

Binding constructs a clever,

**SUSPICION**  
by Robert McCrum  
Macmillan £15.99, 292 pages

**THE ORCHARD ON FIRE**  
by Shena Mackay  
Hutchinson £12.99, 320 pages

**MOON**  
by Jeremy Gavron  
Viking £13.99, 192 pages

**A PERFECT EXECUTION**  
by Tim Binding  
Penguin £15.99, 352 pages

**DUST RAISING**  
by Christopher Burns  
Sceptre £16.99, 192 pages

**THE DREAM MISTRESS**  
by Jenny Diski  
Weidenfeld & Nicolson £5.99, 224 pages

disturbing plot, sets the action convincingly in the 1960s, a world of Max Miller, vodka and Brivie orange, when opinions were held "on everything, Red China, Lady Dicker, *The Goon Show*". In all senses he creates suspense and keeps his readers guessing. A few pages from the end, he presents a superb double-take and on the final page keeps the reader balancing on the edge of Gothic horror.

Christopher Burns' *Dust Raising* is a novel of taut structure which, similarly, maintains its mystery to the end. The abandoned, long-lost daughter of Jamie McGoldrick, successful sculptor, suddenly appears to disrupt his life: he is forced to consider Bishop Berkeley's penses, "Truth is the cry of all, but the game of the few". It is written with intellectual force and embraces intriguing aspects of detective fiction.

Whereas, although Jenny Diski's *The Dream Mistress* has intellectual conviction, there is not enough to overcome a similar dysfunction in form to that which exists in the family it describes. The novel is a confused exercise too dependent on a preconceived formula. Not even a bizarre scene of sexual athletics staged in an airliner "in a toilet high in the sky" sustains much interest. The reader finishes by wondering if whatever the novel was supposed to be about was really worth bothering with.

# Great Leap Forward - to inhumanity

Susan Whitfield on the horrifying parallels between Mao's and Stalin's bids for absolute power

Mao Zedong, asserted François Mitterrand following his 1961 visit to China, is a "humanist" who would not let his people starve. "I diligently searched," wrote the American journalist Edgar Snow in the same year, "for starving people or beggars to photograph... and I do not believe that there is famine in China."

Yet the reality was that Chinese people were dying in their millions in the worst famine in history. Not only was the famine ignored by Mao from 1958 to 1961, but the 30 million or more deaths from starvation in this period were a direct result of his policies: the implementation of large-scale collectivisation in the Great Leap Forward.

What makes this crime worse - for a crime it is - is that almost exactly the same scenario had already been

played out to the same terrible, inevitable outcome. Just like Edgar Snow, western visitors had diligently managed to avoid seeing the famine in the Soviet Ukraine two decades earlier. But following Stalin's downfall and Khrushchev's speech in 1956, Mao Zedong and the Chinese communist leadership were aware of the dangers of over-rapid collectivisation. Indeed, small-scale collectivisation in the mid-1950s had already resulted in falling grain yields in China.

A few leaders, among them minister of defence Peng Dehuai, took the dangers seriously. Peng famine, which had claimed the lives of several of his brothers, was more important than dogma. But as Jasper Becker's ground-breaking study of this period shows, Mao was not going to let the deaths of millions of peasants stand in his way to absolute power. He threw down the

gauntlet at the Lushan summit of party leaders in 1959. If you do not support me, he said, I will take to the hills and form a new guerrilla army, thereby threatening to plunge the country into civil war. Mao rallied behind Mao - and Peng

**HUNGRY GHOSTS: CHINA'S SECRET FAMINE**  
by Jasper Becker  
John Murray £19.99, 352 pages

Dehuai was criticised and imprisoned.

This is a long overdue book and Becker must be credited with finally breaking the silence imposed by Mao and challenging the web of lies accepted all too readily by both China and the west. It was not until recently that estimates of the famine deaths were finally published. Even now history books propagate the two myths

that the famine was largely caused by natural disasters and that its scale was contained by Mao's rationing policy. In fact, as Becker points out, the weather conditions were not particularly adverse during this period and the famine, far from being alleviated by Mao's policies, was their direct consequence.

But the story does not stop here. Becker repeatedly highlights the parallels between the Soviet Union and China, parallels which are still to be fully understood. Just as the Ukraine famine was followed by the Great Terror - Stalin's attempt to regain control and purge his enemies - so the enormity of the Great Leap Forward led Mao to launch the Cultural Revolution. Recent research shows that the Cultural Revolution, far from being a time of anarchy when the Red Guards indiscriminately picked victims, was in

fact a carefully controlled purge by Mao which emulated Stalin's terror even down to the methods of torture used by the government-run criticism committee. One of the few Communist leaders held in any affection, Zhou Enlai, is often credited with having saved many individuals in this time. This book does not make for comfortable reading, but the reality of 30 million or more deaths written out of history because of fear and gullibility should not be comfortable. Becker has spoken to many survivors in his quest for the

facts and their accounts make for chilling reading. After eating anything that moved or grew, including grass, grain seeds and bark of trees, many peasants resorted in their desperation to earth, faeces and the flesh of other humans, including their own children. The Chinese government encouraged the use of "food substitutes": wood pulp, algae and fungi grown in bowls of urine. Yet all the time the state granaries were full. China was exporting grain and Shell employees in Shanghai were being sent hampers from Harrods. Becker tries to explain how the famine could have happened, given the precedent in the Soviet Union. This is the most difficult story to accept: the fact that the lessons of history are ignored and leaders all too often treated as humane gods when they are simply inhumane humans.

Wolff sets all this sex and god and rock 'n' roll against a backdrop of racial violence and emergent black politics. Cooke helped to define the white teenage experience, but he also took pride in his own colour. He took control of his own career, published his own label (Innovations for a black

Music cannot be reduced to a story about someone's life, some sense of mystery needs to be retained. And only one of these books has it.

Picture three scenes. A man runs for a train at Widnes Station and does not have time to write a song. Muddy Waters ambles up to a white blues pianist - "I thought you was black, too" - and did you really shoot your wife? "No." A red Ferrari, bottle of whisky on the floor, stands in front of a hooker's motel at midnight, engine idling, inside the motel the car's owner lies naked, shot dead.

And three books. A biography of popular singing duo Simon and Garfunkel; unfortunately Paul Simon did not write *Homeward Bound* at Widnes Station, but legend has it that he did, and the station

# Music made their world go round

now sports a memorial plaque in honour of an event that never took place. A biography of blues pianist Mose Allison, who has been in the business for 40 years; he wrote the standard "Farmer's Farm" about a man serving time for killing his wife. A biography of Sam Cooke, gospel singer, pop star, nascent political activist, and, according to the LAPD, just another dead nigger on the south side.

So where do two of these three biographies go wrong? Victoria Kingston's study of Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel is disappointingly superficial, simply a homage to the singing duo strung along the intertwining threads of their respective lives. Their complex relationship is barely probed. Their

careers go up and down, they produce records and play in films, have relationships and children and separations, produce more records, and tour. It is a banal success - lots of questions remain unanswered, but there is no sense of mystery (and their careers are not even over yet).

Banalities of a different sort creep into *One Man's Blues*. It is a well written book, stuffed with Mose Allison anecdotes, filled out with nicely phrased contextual detail and stiff musicalological analysis, but it is overwritten. We learn too much about everything, because we are likely to know nothing at all about Mose Allison, and the book becomes a deliberate act of canonisation, laying everything bare.

It is certainly interesting. Walter Fairer and R.G. Collingwood offer an aesthetic rationale for the blues, and Allison himself is not averse to some original pronouncements. For him, there are only three types of music - Bach, Schoenberg, and the blues - and he sees his development of the blues as a quest for the "universal chord" (a jazzier version of Scriabin's mystical chord). Which is all fine and dandy, but Allison is really a journeyman musician, whose job is to support his family (he was happily married by 1951, and had a family of five by 1959). Everything else seems a bit rich.

But everyone has heard of Sam Cooke, and Daniel Wolff does justice to the man who invented soul music: *You Send*

*Me* is an excellent work - compelling, energetic, and packed with references - and ultimately troubling.

Cooke's life is placed in the context of religious revivalism and the rise of the Holiness church, both in the southern cotton fields and in the new urban centres like Chicago. What was important to these black communities certainly was not Bach, Schoenberg, or the blues, but the respective attractions of the blues (the devil's music) and the spiritual (gospel singing).

Cooke was the son of a preacher and a miraculous gospel singer, and yet his halo was a little crooked. One of his friends remembered, "Sam couldn't get away from them women". He did not exactly try

very hard. He played on his sex appeal during gospel performances, which turned on inciting religious ecstasy, fits, and speaking in tongues, and developed these techniques when he crossed into the mainstream - taking the sacred into the secular, gospel into pop. Within a few years his fans were throwing their knickers onto the stage: he had helped to invent the teenager.

Wolff sets all this sex and god and rock 'n' roll against a backdrop of racial violence and emergent black politics. Cooke helped to define the white teenage experience, but he also took pride in his own colour. He took control of his own career, published his own label (Innovations for a black

**SIMON AND GARFUNKEL: THE DEFINITIVE BIOGRAPHY**  
by Victoria Kingston  
Sidgwick & Jackson £15.99, 308 pages

**ONE MAN'S BLUES: THE LIFE AND MUSIC OF MOSE ALLISON**  
by Patti Jones  
Quartet £20, 360 pages

**YOU SEND ME: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SAM COOKE**  
by Daniel Wolff  
Virgin £17.99, 362 pages

singer). He became militant, mixing with Martin Luther King, Malcolm X and Cassius Clay; he refused to play to segregated audiences; he was jailed at a white-only motel; he took up black musicians'

rights, politicised his songwriting.

This is the context for Cooke's disturbing death, which frames the biography. Wolff is circumspect - patiently debunking conspiracy theories and coming to the inevitable conclusion that Cooke was simply shot by a gun-happy landlady while berating her because a girl he had picked up that night had stolen his clothes.

But then something inexplicable happens. Bobby Womack turned up to Cooke's funeral wearing the dead man's clothes; two months later he was engaged to the dead man's widow, saying, like an avatar, "he would want me to do this"; how he was already a father to the children. It is an eerie moment - and it maintains a sense of mystery about the very identity of Sam Cooke.

Nick Groom



## SPORT

## Cricket

## Old sages who know their onions

Teresa McLean discovers why some ageing deities have the edge on up-and-coming younger stars

Gooch is God in Essex. The only thing that distinguishes him from God in Heaven is the familiarity with which his adoring local public addresses him. "Goochie, Goochie, you're a class above. Goochie, Goochie, you've got us all in love."

Beer-soaked, nose-ringed, hair-plaited fans greeted all Graham Gooch's shots operatically in the jubilant corner of Writtle Road, Chelmsford, where we watched Essex pull off an unlikely one-day victory over Lancashire last Sunday. The sentiment had been the same, although more subdued, in the freezing wind at Ilford three weeks earlier when followers huddled in rugs to watch Gooch score 32 deft runs on the way to a last-over defeat by Kent.

"The man has class, that's what he has," they told me as we queued for hot drinks. If Gooch is out, it is the umpire's fault; if the ball is caught or the stumps hit, it is the

fault of those who have overburdened the ageing deity with too many games and too many duties, such as selecting Test players.

Gooch has reached this status without changing his unforthcoming character and his preference for, as he put it, "letting my achievements speak for themselves rather than me going on about them." The only place where he is an extrovert is on the cricket field, but the mere fact of reaching this status is a rare achievement in the modern English game, which is short of cricketers to worship.

I do not mean cricket stars, who

are constantly set up and cut down by the media. I mean cricketers of more long-lasting distinction. Gooch was cheered off the field by a standing crowd last Sunday, not just because he scored 87 not out but because he scored them stylishly and calmly. He left the field calmly. He has become an elder statesman, who can give team and fans the reassurance of experience, all the more so now that he is no longer burdened with the pressures of captaincy and international cricket.

Even the pressures of county cricket have lessened. If Gooch plays badly, he can point to his job

as a selector as his most important one now. He is free just to do his best and his followers relish him as a safe idol. I think modern sport puts so much emphasis on instant success that it has forgotten the value of stability.

John Emburey is another player in his 40s who has been given other cricketing tasks and whose play seems to be flourishing as a result. Last winter Emburey was manager of the successful England A tour to Pakistan and now, after long years with Middlesex, he is at Northamptonshire as chief coach, playing when necessary.

Northampton are delighted with his presence, influence and, sometimes, his off-spin. Emburey is equally delighted with this new, advisory role of his career. "Young players should relax and enjoy the game. The less pressure you put yourself under, the easier it will become," Mark Ramprakash told me sadly that it was impossible to explain how important Emburey had been in helping young Middlesex players to manage that. "Emburey is gone. He's a great loss. Others will have to take over, but it'll take time - years maybe."

For too long captains have had

their leadership choked by masses of unsteady management, when the real requirement is for a team sage, who can give advice without threatening to be a job rival. Advanced age and a variety of occupations are key factors becoming a sage.

A young sage playing himself into power is a threat to team unity. Peter Willey, for instance, ended his long batting career in a turmoil of power struggles and uncertainties in a tormented Leicestershire team where he may not have intended to worsen that state of affairs, but where his strong presence had that

effect. After 17 years at Northampton, Willey moved to Leicester as vice-captain in 1984, becoming captain in 1987.

Philip DeFreitas was one of a number of impetuous, rising young players who proved so difficult to control that Willey resigned the captaincy after only one year. He continued to play for the county, which was a troublesome situation. DeFreitas, David Gower and Chris Lewis left Leicester between 1988 and 1991, the year the county asked Willey to leave.

Willey was in his 40s by then, but he was still a full-time player. He had not moved into his present area of success: umpiring. I am for the ageing sage exuding wisdom and playing part-time with a light touch because it is too late to matter. Or, as they put it in Chelmsford every time a Lancashire man was out: "Goodbye, goodnight. You could not stand up to Goochie. He's in a different league."

## A summer party - off the field

Peter Aspden assesses the opening gambits

I remember an inspired BBC montage of highlights from the 1990 World Cup focusing on the early progress of the Italian and German teams.

There were the Italians, trying to open their account in their opening game: all back-flicks, delicate one-twos, expressions of anguish and waving of arms. The music, naturally enough, was a Rostropovich: frothy, playful, faintly ridiculous. A perfect marriage of sound and image.

There, on the other hand, were the Germans: firing goal after bombastic goal in their early assault on the trophy they would win a couple of weeks later. The soundtrack? It had to be the *Ride of the Valkyries*; nothing else would do.

Cheap stereotypes. But anyone watching the Germans dismantling the Czech Republic in their opening match of Euro 96 at Old Trafford could be left in no doubt as to what their players were humming to prepare for kick-off.

It took less than half an hour for the bombast to start: Christian Ziege, their marvellous left wing-back, impatiently shrugging off a couple of half-hearted challenges to fire the ball inside the goalkeeper's right-hand post. Minutes later, Andy Möller joined in the fun, finishing a 40-metre run with an action replay of Ziege's strike. Game over, try as one might, the phrase ruthless efficiency could scarcely be avoided.

So we looked to the Italians to overturn preconceptions. Sure enough, they provided

plenty of Wagnerian thunder of their own in an enthralling victory over an excellent Russian side at Anfield.

Pierluigi Casiraghi, fulfilling a childhood ambition to play at Liverpool's home ground, hit two ruthless strikes to bag the points. But the whole side was in no mood for idle trippery; they ran, chased and barred the Russians throughout the second half of a game that earlier seemed to be slipping out of reach.



The key to their victory was coach Arrigo Sacchi's replacement of the fey skills of Alessandro Del Piero by the battle-hardened nous of Roberto Donadoni. How England coach Terry Venables must envy Sacchi his versatile wide man, in turn cunning and conscientious, who so helped Paolo Maldini finally keep Andrei Kanchelskis quiet. The 32-year-old Donadoni is football intelligence personified; he will surely play a crucial role in this tournament.

There is a convergence the-

ory in international football which says that all teams must play in a certain way to be effective. Yet to watch the contrasting styles of the Germans and Italians - and we are not talking composers now - is to celebrate the diversity football still has to offer.

Sacchi is still enamoured of the very flat, 4-4-2 formation, constantly squeezing space and pressing in midfield, which brought him such success at AC Milan. It is, among other things, one in the eye for critics of English football who urge a more "sophisticated" formation. Sacchi's style, however, does call for supreme fitness, technique and intelligence. All three were much in evidence at Anfield on Tuesday.

Germany's coach Bert Vogts, by contrast, has instilled in his team a sense of fluidity which is far more reminiscent of the "total football" of the 1970s. It is not only Matthias Sammer, the team's sweeper, who comes forward at the slightest opportunity. Centre-back Thomas Helmer takes on defenders, while Ziege and Stefan Reuter threaten on the flanks. Germany's unsung hero is the balding figure of Dieter Eilts, always filling in the holes when his more extravagant teammates spring forward. He will not win any accolades in Euro 96, but he is indispensable to the German style of play.

And what of England and Scotland? There is a common misconception that British footballers' technical skills are somehow blunted because they



Pierluigi Casiraghi, fulfilling a childhood ambition to play at Liverpool's home ground, bagged Italy's points on Wednesday

like to play at "100 miles-an-hour". This will come as interesting news to anyone who has watched Möller's breaks from midfield or witnessed the classic duel between Maldini and Kanchelskis, who threatened to set Anfield's touchlines alight. British footballers look like they are playing at 100 miles-an-hour because their

brains spend most of the game idling in neutral.

The BBC timed the move which resulted in Italy's second goal - from Di Livio to Zola to Casiraghi to back of the net - at 3.5 seconds. That is the 100 miles-an-hour football. England, by contrast, like to think that Steve McManaman sprinting unsupported for the entire length of the field constitutes a quickening of the game. In truth, it does not even quicken the opposing full back's pulse rate. This is cul-de-sac football, style-free and soulless.

Unless things take a dramatic turn, Euro 96 is going to

become known as the tournament which laid to rest the myth that, while British football might lack tactical subtlety, it yields to no one in pace and stamina. That limp second-half display by England against the Swiss at Wembley last Saturday was undeniably sluggish, while the Scots, admittedly stubborn, were clinging on against the Netherlands with a faintly humiliating desperation.

One can only feel a little sorry for Venables, who is becoming increasingly embroiled in off-the-field stories (although he should be used to them) when he has

such on-the-field problems to address.

If his young charges really cannot understand why drinking in a night club in the small hours after such an arduous performance might not be the best idea in the world, there is little we "traitors" can add. For Venables to compare it with Italian or Spanish players sipping wine at lunch or dinner is a disingenuousness too far.

The good news for "marriage England" - who would have thought that England's football would provide a more evocative interpretation of the Dark Ages than that listless opening ceremony? - is that the Euro

96 party is going with a swing. Supporters are mixing, drinking, enjoying.

I must admit I had had my doubts when, at Wembley, I saw a brisk trade in black T-shirts displaying a bulldog puffing on a Churchillian cigar and bearing the ominous words: "England: The Nightmare Returns." But, then again, I had not realised the prophetic message referred to events on the field.

Peter Aspden has been awarded the Raymond Pitter Prize by the Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland, for his article on its current exhibition "Olympism in Antiquity".

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FT Surveys

## Rugby/Huw Richards

## Facing up to power play

Visitors to Dunedin in New Zealand should visit the Early Settlers Museum, chronicling the lives of its pioneering 19th century inhabitants. The Scottish rugby union team - who play the All Blacks in the city today - might find it particularly useful.

Decorating an entire wall are portraits of those hardy settlers. Dour, dark clad, disapprovingly Victorian and overwhelmingly Scots Presbyterian, they are as grimly forbidding a bunch as can ever have gathered in one place - at least, until New Zealand started fielding rugby teams.

As Scotland contemplate their opponents and wonder how they became that way, there is at least the compensation of knowing that their outlook on life has impeccably Caledonian origins. Not least of Scotland's tasks is convincing the southern hemisphere that its scarcely concealed contempt for the other half of the world is misplaced.

With Wales in Australia and Scotland touring, they will at least see the European teams most committed to imaginative rugby. But that spirit of enterprise must now reckon with the power, pace and quality of support play displayed in the Super 12 competition - linking the best teams in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand - and by Australia in last week's 56-26 defeat of Wales.

Anyone watching Wales play

Australia in the 1990s has needed a pocket calculator, a list of scoring records and (if Welsh) a high pain threshold.

The priority now for Welsh rugby's rulers is simple - don't panic. Their predecessors' sacking of Tony Gray after the New Zealand tour of 1988 was, against much competition, the worst Welsh decision of the last decade. Not to keep faith with coach Kevin Bowring, and the change in outlook and tactics introduced last season would be, whatever happens next week in Sydney, a close second.

Scotland generally travel better. But the odds are that this morning's match and the second test in Auckland next Saturday will also conform to recent historical trends - that they are normally good enough to give New Zealand a decent game, but never quite manage (and never have in 91 years and 18 attempts) to beat them.

Best of their recent near misses was the second test at Auckland in 1990, the wonderfully combative scrum-half Gary Armstrong's finest hour as they fell unlikely by 21-18. Armstrong could be back today. But, great player as he is, this may not help Scotland.

The absent Bryan Redpath's low-key, quick-passing style has helped release the creative genius of Gregor Townsend. And there is also the worry of a perennially dodgy front five.

Give Scotland England's playing resources - or England

Scotland's creatively pragmatic intelligence - and you might fashion a team to beat the southern giants.

Instead, Scotland serve New Zealand as the appetiser for a main course which challenges the proposition that you can have too much of a good thing. Today's match is the second of 10 the All Blacks will play in 13 weeks - by comparison full-back George Nepia, an unquestioned all-time great, took six years (1924-30) to accumulate a mere nine caps.

Five of those games will be against world champions South Africa - two in the new Tri-Nation championship also including Australia. Four will be played in South Africa.

The All Blacks, like a rich man choosing between a Bentley and the Ferrari, must decide whether Josh Kronfeld or Michael Jones plays outside and settle between Jeff Wilson, Glen Osborne and Hong Kong Sevens sensation Christian Cullen at full-back.

These quandaries will get them zero sympathy from opponents worried about line-out possession, the relatively poor performance of their provinces in a Super 12 won by Auckland and the ever-present nightmare of coping with Jonah Lomu.

Winger James Small, normally bullish even by the standards of international rugby players, recently painted Lomu

as rugby's equivalent of the West Indian pace attack, inducing genuine fear in opponents.

The key for South Africa may be recreating last year's intensity. The World Cup final looked like the defeat of an exceptional team by a merely highly motivated one. This series will tell us how far that was true.

It will also overshadow a development potentially as significant as the Tri-Nations. Realisation finally dawned among the Pacific regions second division - the likes of Canada, Fiji and West Samoa - that waiting for serious help from the big league meant waiting forever. (For all of the game's cant about international freemasonry, the big European unions, France apart, have been similarly neglectful of continental rugby.) The first act of the big three, on hitting the Super 12 jackpot, was to cut the Pacific islanders out of it.

Eight of them devised their own Pacific Championship, but the New Zealand firm charged with raising the requisite \$2m was unable to find the support. Unabashed, the northern quartet of Canada, USA, Hong Kong and Japan, have started their own competition and remain hopeful of bringing in Fiji, Tonga, Argentina and West Samoa in next year.

An opportunity perhaps for a sponsor really interested in putting something into the game?

What's on the principal cities



## INTERNATIONAL ARTS GUIDE

## What's on in the principal cities

## ADELAIDE

**EXHIBITION**  
Art Gallery of South Australia Tel: 81-8-2077000  
● Brett Whiteley Retrospective: Selected Masterpieces: this touring exhibition highlights the artistic talent of one of Australia's most controversial artists. Selected from the major retrospective which was held last year, the exhibition comprises paintings from public and private collections in Australia and other countries; to Jun 16

## AMSTERDAM

**CONCERT**  
Concertgebouw Tel: 31-20-5730573  
● Nederlands Philharmonisch Orkest with conductor Vassili Sinaïski and viola-player Kim Kashkashian perform works by Kancheli and Shostakovich; 8.15pm; Jun 18, 19  
**DANCE**  
Het Middelste Theater Tel: 31-20-5518117  
● Artistic: a choreography by William Forsythe to music by J.S. Bach, performed by Het Nationale Ballet. With narrators Nicolas Champion and Kate Strong, and pianist Margot Kazyminska; 8.15pm; Jun 15, 17, 19

**EXHIBITION**  
Rijksmuseum Tel: 31-20-6732121  
● Disegni, Drie eeuwen Italiaanse tekenkunst: uit eigen bezit: exhibition featuring 80 drawings by Italian artists from the 15th to the 18th century. Included are works by artists such as Pierro di Cosimo, Sebastiano del Piombo, Federico Barocci, Carlo Maratta and Giambattista Tiepolo; to Aug 4

## BAD KISSINGEN

**FESTIVAL**  
Kissinger Sommer Internationale Musikfestspiele Tel: 49-971-807110  
● Kissinger Sommer Music Festival: during the last century, Bad Kissingen was the favorite spot of European nobility and the family of the Russian czars. To accommodate such important guests, the Royal House of Wittelsbach built the Regentenbau, with its four concert halls seating from 100 to 1,100 persons. Each year these halls come alive with international artists during this Bavarian music festival, now in its 11th year. Among this year's artists are Lorin Maazel, Krzysztof Penderecki, Yehudi Menuhin and Yuri Temirkanov; from Jun 20 to Jul 14

## BARCELONA

**EXHIBITION**  
Fundació Antoni Tàpies Tel: 34-3-4870315  
● Cragie Horsfield: exhibition of about 50 photographs by the British artist Cragie Horsfield, most of which were made in Barcelona on the occasion of this exhibition; to Jul 28  
Fundació Joan Miró Tel: 34-3-3291909  
● Alain Fleischer. Photographs: this exhibition of photographs by Alain Fleischer forms part of the Primavera Fotográfica. After studying literature at the Sorbonne, Fleischer became fascinated by the world of films, where he was to work professionally since making his first feature film in 1968. His photographic work demonstrates the artist's desire to avoid limiting himself to a single artistic discipline. Mirrors are of great importance in his work. He projects an image on a wall and photographs the mirror reflection of this image projected on the same wall. To coincide with the exhibition, a cycle of Alain Fleischer films is shown; to Jun 18

## BASEL

**EXHIBITION**  
Kunstmuseum Basel Tel: 41-61-2710228  
● Kupferstich, Radierung, Aquatinta. Werke von Schongauer bis Baselitz aus dem Kupferstichkabinett Basel: exhibition of engravings, etchings and aquatints from the 15th century until the present. The exhibits come from the Kupferstichkabinett in Basel and include works by Schongauer, Dürer, Melan, Rembrandt, Piranesi, Goya, Picasso, Klee, Giacometti, Newman and Baselitz; to Aug 25

## BERLIN

**CONCERT**  
Deutsche Oper Berlin Tel: 49-30-3438401  
● Gemine Burana; by Orff. Conducted by Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos and performed by the Chor und Orchester der Deutschen Oper Berlin and the Knabenchor Berlin. Soloists include McCarthy, Fortune, Resz and Voliak; 8pm; Jun 21, 22 (7pm)  
**EXHIBITION**  
Neue Nationalgalerie Tel: 49-30-262662  
● Georg Baselitz: large retrospective exhibition devoted to the work of Georg Baselitz. The display includes 100 paintings and 10 sculptures from European and American collections; to Sep 29  
**OPERA**  
Komische Oper Tel: 49-30-202600  
● La Bohème; by Puccini. Conducted by Shao-Chia Li and performed by the Komische Oper. Soloists include George, Mewes and Schmckenbecker; 7pm; Jun 21

## BIRMINGHAM

**CONCERT**  
Symphony Hall Tel: 44-121-2002000  
● The Michael Nyman Band: in a programme created to celebrate the European Football Championships.



In Munich: 'Russische Schöne in Landschaft', 1904 by Kandinsky

The first half of the programme features After Extra Time, the title of his new album, which Nyman describes as a five-a-side football match for his band, and includes 'The Final Score', in which the band play live to Nyman's Channel Four football film. The second half features Memorial, a score which includes music from *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife & Her Lover*, featuring the voice of Sarah Leonard; 7.30pm; Jun 20

## BRUSSELS

**EXHIBITION**  
Palais des Beaux-Arts Tel: 32-2-5078466  
● L'art en résistance. Peintres allemands de l'entre-deux-guerres: exhibition of works by German artists, created between the first and second world wars. The display includes 200 paintings and drawings by artists such as Max Beckmann, Otto Dix and Georges Grosz, giving an overview of German art in this period. The works come from the collection of Marvin and Janet Feldman; to Sep 8  
**OPERA**  
Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie Tel: 32-2-2291200  
● Carmen; by Bizet. Conducted by Bertrand de Billy and performed by La Monnaie. Soloists include Graciela Araya, Gösta Winbergh, Barbara Bonney and Mark S. Doss; 7.30pm; Jun 16 (3pm), 18, 20

## CAPE TOWN

**OPERA**  
Nico Theatre Tel: 27-21-215470  
● La Tragedie de Carmen; by Bizet. Conducted by Henry Moodie and performed by the Capes Opera. Soloists include Katherine Henderson, Janine Moolman, Abel Motaocel and Angela Gilbert; 8.15pm; Jun 15, 17, 19, 21, 22

## CHICAGO

**MUSICAL**  
Shubert Theater Tel: 1-312-977-1700  
● How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying: created by Frank Loesser and Abe Burrows. Directed by Des McAnuff. The cast includes Ralph Macchio; Tue-Thu 7.30pm, Fri, Sat 8pm, Sun 3pm, Wed, Sat also 2pm; to Jun 23 (Not Mon)  
The Goodman Theatre Tel: 1-312-443-3800  
● The House of Martin Guerre; by Arden. Directed by David Petrarca and performed by the Goodman Theatre. Soloists include Julian Molnar, Anthony Grivello and Guy Adkins; 7.30pm; from Jun 21 to Aug 4

## DUBLIN

**EXHIBITION**  
Irish Museum of Modern Art Tel: 353-1-6718666  
● Sean Scully: Twenty Years: this exhibition includes about 30 paintings and 32 watercolours covering the two decades during which Scully moved from England to the US, obtained American citizenship and established himself as a pivotal figure in post-war abstract painting. Several of the works are drawn from the artist's own collection; to Aug 26

## GENEVA

**CONCERT**  
Victoria Hall Tel: 41-22-3263573  
● Orchestre de la Suisse Romande: with conductor Heinz Holliger and cellist David Geringas perform works by Bartók, Gubaidulina and R. Schumann; 8.30pm; Jun 19

## GLASGOW

**CONCERT**  
Glasgow Royal Concert Hall Tel: 44-141-3326833  
● The Royal Scottish National Orchestra: with conductor Wayne Marshall and trumpeter Ole Edvard Norheim perform works by Bernstein and Jolivet; 7.30pm; Jun 19

## HAMBURG

**CONCERT**  
Musiktheater Hamburg Tel: 49-40-345920  
● Philharmonisches Staatsorchester: with conductor Gerd Albrecht and pianist Lars Vogt perform Mozart's Symphony No.25 in G minor, K183, Piano Concerto No.9 in E flat, K271, and Symphony No.40 in G minor, K550; 11am; Jun 16, 17 (8pm)  
**DANCE**  
Namburgleiche Staatsoper Tel: 49-40-351721  
● The Sleeping Beauty: a choreography by Mats Ek to music by Tchaikovsky, performed by the

Hamburg Ballet. Soloists include Boris Becker, Anna Grabka and Garai Gouda; 7.30pm; Jun 19

## LAUSANNE

**CONCERT**  
Théâtre de Beaulieu Tel: 41-21-6432211  
● Orchestre de la Suisse Romande: with conductor Heinz Holliger and cellist David Geringas perform works by Bartók, Gubaidulina and R. Schumann; 8.30pm; Jun 20

## LEIPZIG

**CONCERT**  
Gewandhaus zu Leipzig Tel: 49-341-12700  
● Gewandhauskonzerte: concerts on historic locations in Leipzig, by members of the Gewandhausorchester and Gewandhauschöre with conductor Kurt Masur. The concerts include works by Beethoven, Mozart, Mendelssohn, J. Strauss and others; 8pm; Jun 18  
**EXHIBITION**  
Städtische Kunsthalle Tel: 49-341-29384  
● Paul Klee. Die Zeit der Refle: exhibition of works by Paul Klee (1879-1940) from the collection of the Klee family. The display features 140 works, including paintings, watercolours and drawings, most of which were created in the 1930s; to Jun 18

## LEWES

**FESTIVAL**  
Glyndebourne Opera Festival Tel: 44-1273-812321  
● Glyndebourne Festival Opera: this year's edition of this prestigious annual opera festival, initiated by John Christie and his wife, soprano Audrey Midway, features 74 performances of six operas: Handel's *Theodora*, Berg's *Lulu*, Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, Rossini's *Emmeline*, R. Strauss' *Arabella* and Mozart's  *Così fan tutte*. The London Philharmonic continues as the festival's resident orchestra, playing for all performances except *Theodora*, for which the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment returns; to Aug 25

## LIVERPOOL

**EXHIBITION**  
Tate Gallery Liverpool Tel: 44-151-7093223  
● Joan Miró - Printmaker 1933-63: exhibition of etchings, dry-point engravings, lithographs and aquatints by Joan Miró, giving an overview of the artist's graphic work. The prints in this exhibition are from the Joan Miró Foundation in Barcelona; from Jun 18 to Aug 26

## LONDON

**CONCERT**  
Royal Opera House - Covent Garden Tel: 44-171-2129234  
● Il Corvo; by Verdi. Concert performance conducted by Evelino Pido and performed by the Royal Opera. Soloists include Maria Dragoni, José Cura and Roberto Serio. Part of the Verdi Festival; 7.30pm; Jun 18, 21  
Wigmore Hall Tel: 44-171-9352141  
● José van Dam; and pianist Maciej Pikulski perform works by Brahms, Wolf and Duparc; 7.30pm; Jun 20  
**EXHIBITION**  
British Museum Tel: 44-171-6361555  
● David Le Marchand (1674-1726) - An Ingenious Man for Carving in Ivory: exhibition of works by this French-born artist who settled in Edinburgh in 1696. Among the distinguished patrons who flocked to him for portrait busts and cameos were royalty - Queen Anne and King George I - aristocrats such as the Duke of Marlborough, politicians and intellectuals like Sir Isaac Newton; to Sep 15  
National Gallery Tel: 44-171-7472885  
● Degas as a Collector: this exhibition features Degas' collection of paintings, drawings and prints. The display includes works by Ingres, Delacroix and Manet; to Aug 26  
● Degas: Beyond Impressionism: this exhibition features the late work of Edgar Degas. Degas achieved fame with his pictures of the ballet and the racecourse, but he continued to work long afterwards, experimenting with new techniques and subjects; to Aug 26  
Victoria & Albert Museum Tel: 44-171-9368500  
● Leighton Centenary Celebrations: an exhibition on the occasion of the centennial of the death of Frederic, Lord Leighton (1830-1896). The

centrepiece will be the newly restored frescoes 'The Arts of Industry Applied to War' and 'The Arts of Industry Applied to Peace'. These works are among the most important public commissions of the Victorian era. Related displays will look at Leighton's working practices, his work as a book illustrator and photographs; to Sep 8  
**JAZZ & BLUES**  
Queen Elizabeth Hall Tel: 44-171-9804242  
● The Great British Jazz Band: with trumpeter Mike Cotton, clarinetist Dave Shepherd, pianist Brian Lemon, guitarist Jim Douglas, drummer Allan Ganley and guest star Nat Gonella; 7.45pm; Jun 17  
**POP-MUSIC**  
Wembley Stadium, Arena and Congress Centre Tel: 44-181-9001234  
● Van Morrison and Ray Charles: performance by the Irish singer/instrumentalist and the American singer/pianist; 7.30pm; Jun 19

## LOS ANGELES

**EXHIBITION**  
MOCA at the Temporary Contemporary Tel: 1-213-621-6222  
● Images of an Era: Selections from the Permanent Collection: this exhibition presents highlights of the museum's collection from the 1940s to the 1970s. The chronologically organised display includes works by artists such as Ansel Adams, Jasper Johns, Donald Judd, Ellsworth Kelly, Franz Kline, Barry Le Va, Agnes Martin, Claes Oldenburg, Jackson Pollock, Robert Rauschenberg, James Rosenquist, Mark Rothko, Richard Serra, Robert Smithson and Andy Warhol; to Jun 23

## MADRID

**EXHIBITION**  
Fundación Cultural Mapfre Vida Tel: 34-1-5811628  
● Postrimerías. Alegorías de la muerte en el arte español contemporáneo: exhibition focusing on death as a theme in the work of Spanish contemporary artists. The display features 60 works by more than 30 artists, including Picasso, Dalí, Solana, Saura and Tàpies; to Jun 30

## MANNHEIM

**EXHIBITION**  
Städtische Kunsthalle Tel: 49-621-29384  
● Paul Klee. Die Zeit der Refle: exhibition of works by Paul Klee (1879-1940) from the collection of the Klee family. The display features 140 works, including paintings, watercolours and drawings, most of which were created in the 1930s; to Jun 18

## MILAN

**OPERA**  
Teatro alla Scala di Milano Tel: 39-2-720374  
● Fedora; by Giordano. Conducted by Armando Gatto and performed by the Opera Teatro alla Scala. Soloists include Keith Olsen and Giovanna Casella; 8pm; Jun 18

## MONTREAL

**EXHIBITION**  
Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal Tel: 1-514-285-1600  
● René Magritte: major exhibition devoted to the work of this Belgian Surrealist. The display includes about 100 items from public and private collections in Europe and North America. As well as paintings and drawings, the show features sculptures, objects, photographs, posters and illustrations; from Jun 20 to Oct 27

## MUNICH

**CONCERT**  
Philharmonie im Gasteig Tel: 49-89-4809625  
● Münchner Philharmoniker: with conductor Semyon Bychkov and pianists Katia und Marielle Labèque perform works by Mozart and Shostakovich; 8pm; Jun 19, 22, 23, 24 (7.30pm)  
**EXHIBITION**  
Haus der Kunst Tel: 49-89-211270  
● Die russische Avantgarde: this exhibition brings together more than 500 works of Russian avant-garde art from the original collection of George Costakis. The display includes works by Chagall, Goncharova, Kandinsky, Kline, Lissitzky, Malevich, Popova, Rodchenko and Tatlin. After the showing in Munich, the exhibition will travel to Tampere and Paris; to Aug 4

## NANTES

**EXHIBITION**  
Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes Tel: 33-40-47 65 65  
● Henry Moore - L'Expression première, dessins, plaques et terre cuite: retrospective exhibition devoted to the British sculptor Henry Moore (1898-1986). The display features 120 works created between 1921 and 1982, including 40 drawings and 80 sculptures. After the showing in Nantes, the exhibition will travel to Mannheim; to Sep 2

## NEW YORK

**EXHIBITION**  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art Tel: 1-212-879-5500  
● American Printmaking 1860-1900: Winslow Homer and His Contemporaries: an exhibition to complement the Homer painting retrospective by providing a context for the artist's printmaking efforts. Drawn entirely from the museum's collection, Homer printmaking from his early and late career is shown along with works by printmakers active during Homer's career; from Jun 18 to Sep 22  
● Winslow Homer: retrospective exhibition featuring about 180 paintings, watercolours and drawings

by the 19th century American painter. The display, giving an overview of Homer's work in more than 20 years, is organised chronologically in thematic groupings that include depictions of the Civil War, genre scenes celebrating rural America in the 1870s, heroic images of seafaring life, seascapes of Prout's Neck, Maine, where the artist settled in 1883, and the tragic painting from his final years; from Jun 20 to Sep 22  
**JAZZ & BLUES**  
Blue Note Tel: 1-212-475-6592  
● James Moody Quartet: and the Elvin Jones Jazz Machine; 8pm & 11.30pm; from Jun 18 to Jun 23  
**THEATRE**  
Symphony Space Tel: 1-212-864-5400  
● 15th Annual Mythos Extravaganza: more than 100 Broadway actors and Joycean enthusiasts celebrate James Joyce's novel of the century; 12 noon; Jun 16

## OSLO

**POP-MUSIC**  
Spektrum Tel: 47-22-176 810  
● Bryan Adams: performance by the Canadian singer/guitarist; 7.30pm; Jun 18

## OTTAWA

**EXHIBITION**  
National Gallery of Canada Tel: 1-613-990-1995  
● Corot: major retrospective featuring 135 works by the French 19th century landscape painter Jean Baptiste Corot and commemorating his birth in 1796. The exhibition is organised by the Musée du Louvre, the National Gallery of Canada and the Metropolitan Museum of Art; from Jun 21 to Sep 22

## PARIS

**CONCERT**  
Salle Pleyel Tel: 33-1-45 61 53 00  
● Vladimir Ashkenazy: recital by the pianist. The programme includes works by Mozart and Chopin; 8.30pm; Jun 17  
**EXHIBITION**  
Centre Georges Pompidou Tel: 33-1-44 78 12 33  
● L'informe: exhibition focusing on the history of Modernism. The display includes works by Pollock, Duchamp, Fontana and others; to Aug 26  
Musée des Arts Décoratifs Tel: 33-1-44 55 57 50  
● Les Dubuffet de Dubuffet: exhibition of works by Jean Dubuffet from the collection of the artist himself. The works were donated to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in 1967. The collection includes 21 paintings, 135 drawings and 6 sculptures, created between 1942 and 1967; to Jun 30  
**OPERA**  
L'Opéra de Paris Bastille Tel: 33-1-44 73 13 99  
● Norma; by Bellini. Conducted by Carlo Rizzi and performed by the Opéra National de Paris. Soloists include Franco Farina, Dimitri Kavrakos, Carol Vanessa and Susanne Mentzer; 7.30pm; Jun 17, 20  
Théâtre du Châtelet Tel: 33-1-42 33 00 00  
● Janina; by Janáček. Conducted by Sir Simon Rattle and performed by the Opéra du Châtelet. Soloists include Nancy Gustafson, Philip Langridge, Graham Clark and Anja Silja; 7.30pm; Jun 20

## PHILADELPHIA

**EXHIBITION**  
Philadelphia Museum of Art Tel: 1-215-763-8100  
● Cézanne: an international loan exhibition spanning the career of Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), organised by the Philadelphia Museum of Art in collaboration with the Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Musée d'Orsay in Paris and the Tate Gallery in London. The display includes 100 oil paintings, 35 watercolours and 35 drawings from public and private collections; to Sep 1

## TOKYO

**CONCERT**  
Kioi Hall Tel: 81-3-52764500  
● Evelyn Glennie and Philip Smith: the percussionist and pianist perform works by Paganini, Alvaré, Kreisler and Bartók; 7pm; Jun 21

## VIENNA

**CONCERT**  
Konzerthaus Tel: 43-1-7121211  
● Camerata Academica: with conductor Alexander Janiczek and pianist Andrés Schiff perform works by Beethoven and Mozart; 11am; Jun 16  
Musikverein Tel: 43-1-5058681  
● Bryn Terfel: accompanied by pianist Malcolm Martineau. The bass performs songs by R. Schumann, Schubert, Fauré and Vaughan Williams; 7.30pm; Jun 19  
● Murray Perahia: the pianist performs works by Scarlatti, Handel, J.S. Bach, R. Schumann and Mendelssohn; 7.30pm; Jun 19  
● Wiener Philharmoniker: with conductor John Eliot Gardiner and the English Baroque Choir perform works by Mendelssohn and Bruckner. Vocalists include Anne Sofie von Otter, Luba Organosova, Christoph Prégardier and Elke Wm Schulte; 7.30pm; Jun 17

## WASHINGTON

**CONCERT**  
Concert Hall Tel: 1-202-467 4600  
● National Symphony Orchestra: with conductor Christopher Hogwood and pianist Steven Lubin perform Mozart's Keyboard Concerto in D major, K40, Serenade in C minor for Wind Octet, K388 and Keyboard Fantasy, K475; 7pm; Jun 21

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## CHESS

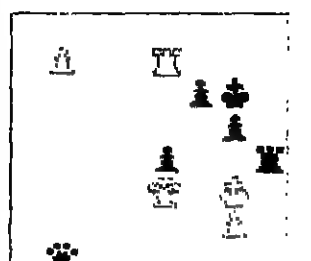
The postponed Karpov (Russia) v Kamsky (US) 20-game Fide world title match began in Elista, Kalmykia, this week with the players still arguing over money and conditions. The prize fund from Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, head of Fide and the small Caucasian republic, is nominally \$2m, but with possible large cuts for Fide and the 'Kalmyk Children's Fund'.

On the eve of the start, they had still not agreed whether games should be adjourned after six hours (Fide rules when the 1993-96 championship cycle began, and favoured by the champion Karpov, 45) or played to a finish in seven (current practice and preferred by Kamsky, 22). Karpov won this dispute, at least temporarily, when he adjourned a pawn up and Kamsky resigned without resumption.

Game two was all Kamsky, who refuted Karpov's excessive waiting tactics (Kamsky v Karpov, Caro-Kann).  
1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 c4 Nf6 5 Nc3 e6 6 Nc3 Bb4 7 Bc7 Nxd5 8 Bxd5 Nc6 9 Bb3 Be7 10 0-0 0-0 11 Qe2 Nf6 12 Ne4 Bb7 in game 4 he played Qb5! 13 Rxd1 Rb6 14 Rf1 Nd5 15 Nc3 Nf6! 16 a3 Qc7 17 Bg5 Qa5 18 d5: exd5. 19 Rxf6 Bxf6 20 Bxh7+ Kxh7 21 Rxd5 Bxc3 Giving up his queen for rook and bishop, but if Qc7? 22 Qh3!

and 23 Rxd7 with a pawn up and a fine position.  
22 Rxa5 Bxa5 23 b4! Kf8 24 bxa5 Bg4 25 a6 bxa6 26 Qc4 Bxf3 27 Qxf3. The game lasted another 36 moves until Karpov lost more material and resigned. What was Garry Kasparov doing meanwhile? Compensating for Yeltsin, they said. Latest score: Karpov 2½, Kamsky 1½.

No 1,132



Campana v Shirazi. Lane Page 1991. A pawn down but with a passed b7 pawn, White played 1 Rf1. As the game went on, that (a) Campana has blundered (b) it is the only way to save the game (c) White is lost anyway (d) it's a trap, let's see if Shirazi falls for it

Leonard Barden  
Solutions Page 11

## BRIDGE

The defence on this deal was so slick, the declarer thought it rudimentary. That it was not repeated at any other table, proves otherwise.  
The star of the show, sitting East in this Cape Town tournament, was Irving Rose, the former British international who died a few weeks ago.

N  
♠ K J  
♥ A Q 4  
♦ 8 7 3 3  
♣ A Q 8  
W  
♠ 7 5 3 2  
♥ 8 5 3  
♦ A 6  
♣ 9 4 3  
E  
♠ A 6  
♥ 10 8 7  
♦ K 4  
♣ 10 6 5 2

South opened 1NT and North bid 2NT. As West, I led ♠ 4 - 4th highest leads being reserved for suits headed by at least one of the top four honours. East took his ♠ A, and returned ♠ 4, won in dummy.

Requiring only one diamond trick for success, declarer led 3♦ from dummy. Spurning the 'second hand plays low' advice, Irving pounced with K♦. Now, he cleared the spade suit so that, when I won my ♠ A, I could cash two spade winners to set the contract.

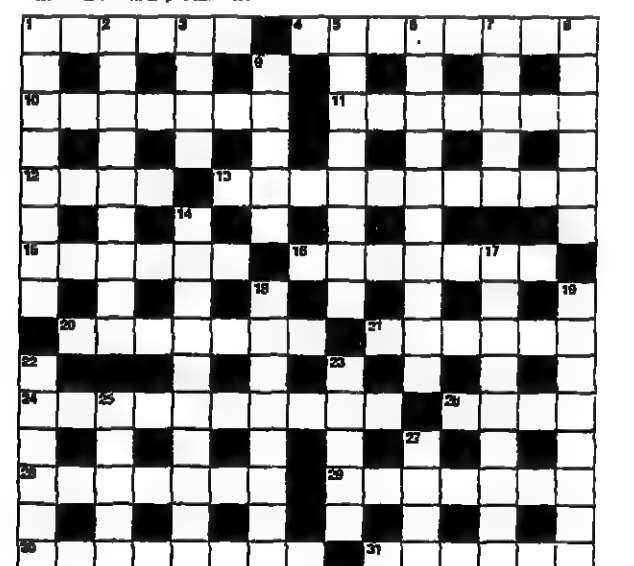
The key play of rising with K♦ was a classic expert manoeuvre to ensure that the hand with the long suit retains his entry until he needs it to cash his winners. If West's entry goes too early, the defence is over. Indeed, if East plays small, West might duck to keep his entry - resulting in a spectacular crash on the next round. Playing K♦ may seem aggressive, but it is unlikely to cost, because if declarer holds a tenace, the King is worthless.

Irving will be remembered not only for his speed, flair and expertise, but also for being a consistently encouraging and loyal partner - a virtue to which we should all aspire.

Paul Mendelson

## CROSSWORD

No. 9,095 Set by DINMUTZ  
A prize of a classic Pelikan Souvenir 800 fountain pen for the first correct solution opened and five runner-up prizes of 500 Pelikan vouchers. Solutions by Wednesday June 20, marked Crossword on the evening of the Financial Times, Number One Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HL. Solution on Saturday June 23.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**ACROSS**  
1 Mail-bomb making large sum of money (6)  
4 Mosquito was one design in pottery (8)  
10 Resolute, expert fighter-pilot (7)  
11 I go wrong in suggestion for restaurant-food (7)  
12 Double red blown in the wind (4)  
13 Delivery-charge for geranium-like plant (6-4)  
15 Brewing vessel English apt to bring out (6)  
16 Print can be charming, even without a leader (7)  
20 Hors d'oeuvre stirring variety (7)  
21 Enphatic denial about Road's first country (8)  
24 Peace-makers paving the way, tirelessly (10)  
25 High water? (4)  
28 Tearing about makes Aberdeen such a city (7)  
29 Triumphs a risk to constitution (7)  
30 Members and constituents? (8)  
31 Girl out of breath (6)  
**DOWN**  
1 Got into Egypt, illegally, as fugitive of Ham (5)  
2 Banger producing oil-patch - a mess! (9)  
3 Dash from the lane (4)  
5 Precise bill presented to cleric (8)  
6 Unusual stripe over bonnet produces many revs (10)  
7 Bail released one giving excuse in court (5)  
8 Archdeacon enters cathedral so calmly (6)  
9 Slabby organ, this, employed in country-dance (6)  
14 Opening case in grammar-school (10)  
17 Game course (8)  
18 Piece of French silver designed, would you say? (6)  
19 Halls for taking off jumpers, we hear - equipped with bars (10)  
22 Reserve this book of Kipling's (8)  
23 Row coming up - uses needles (6)  
25 Female inadequate lover? (6)  
26 Solid fuel approved in church (4)

**WINNERS 9,095:** R. Howe, Harlington, Middlesex; D. Fairburn, Kenilworth, Warwick; Tracy Fryer, Crail, Fife; Sally Gregory, Lincoln; J. Oakton, Whitechurch, Hants; M. O'Meara, Hylke, Kent.





James Morgan

## At last a sporting chance for peace

Is football becoming a gentleman's game in a new spirit of international goodwill? Today's match could be the test

I have a feeling - maybe it is premature, maybe a little naive - that it could just be the case that great sporting events help bring people together. The general view is that such occasions are a source of ill will and xenophobia. Football is almost synonymous with the tattooed skin-head, the lumpen lout. England gave the world the game and then provided its most obvious symbol. The one country that remained aloof from international team-sport competitions, or at least from any success, the US, is one of the few to escape the ubiquitous sporting hoo-

lian. But the latest footballing festival seems to be moving into a new era of friendship. Only the Bulgarian team's rejection of Scarborough as a home marred the opening week. But their football reflected the game as a metaphor for life on this continent and the compromises involved. A philosophical account appeared in *Bulgarskiya Armiya* after the team drew with Spain last Sunday. It was headlined: "One goal, one point and one red card."

It emerged also that the peoples of the seven continental European Union nations in the tournament

refused to regard England as an enemy, in spite of the best efforts of its government. As *Liberation* put it: "At the moment when London plunges Europe into confusion by provoking the war of bovine sperm and tallow, one won't be able to avoid seeing the great and [if possible] joyful celebrations as a fable of the hand outstretched, in spite of everything, by a Europe which obstinately refuses to consider England as foreign... From the mad cow to football, it is a little of the same and ancient story which is finally played out here: the rejection of rancour on the part of a

continent for which England will always be European, even in spite of herself."

It is hard to imagine anything more calculated to provoke a vicious reaction in England than this gesture of goodwill. But the English have behaved well, up to now. Their national side even went so far as to give up football in the second half of the match against Switzerland last Saturday, just to make absolutely sure their guests did not go away from the game empty handed. The Paris sports daily, *L'Equipe*, was surprised not only by the relaxed English

approach but also by the phlegmatic crowd: "Even recognising that the spectators at this opening match consisted of businessmen, rather than the normal fans, the public never made itself heard. Never has Wembley been so mute."

Things have come to a pretty pass if soccer crowds are drawn from the torpid middle classes. If this is so, which sport will now carry the flame of violent national passions? The answer emerged on Monday - rugby. The English Rugby Football Union signed a contract with BSkyB giving Rupert Murdoch the TV rights to all

England's home games for £87.5m. The Welsh, Irish and Scots were appalled - they, with France, would hold a four nation championship if England persisted in this course. The *Western Mail*, the newspaper of Wales, said England's action was "the most blatant example of the greed and incompetence which have come to typify the game". Up to now these have been the virtues that made soccer the world's favourite sport.

The Scots agreed with the Welsh, but according to *L'Equipe*, France would not be interested in a championship without the team it loves

to hate, England. Rugby is now pulled apart by nationalism, as well as greed, which could wipe out the Five Nations, one of the greatest, oldest competitions in the world.

The test for the new era of gentleman's soccer comes today, England play Scotland. If that test is passed, the European championships could turn into *Liberation*'s "joyful festival". Euro 96 may not make Europeans of Englishmen but it may well provide a happier symbol of unity than the forthcoming Maastricht championship, Euro 98.

James Morgan is BBC World Service economics correspondent.

Private View

## The struggle of the survivor

Christian Tyler meets Elie Wiesel who talks about life after genocide

A hand went up near the front of the audience. "Professor Wiesel, I have a question, I too, was on the death march from Auschwitz. And my question is, may I come forward now and shake you by the hand?"

A diminutive figure detached itself from the crowd and approached the platform. There was a profound hush as the two men embraced. A young woman in the audience began weeping silently.

For the writer and teacher Elie Wiesel, among the most prominent living witnesses to the genocide of European Jewry, moments like this at a recent gathering in London are inevitable. This softly spoken professor and Nobel Peace prize winner has become the voice through which camp survivors can speak, the mourner through whom families of the millions dead can grieve.

But his injunction *zachor* (remember) is fraught with paradox as well as pain. It can even be controversial, not least among a younger generation of Jewish academic historians.

For Wiesel asserts that the survivor knows something which nobody else can ever know, something which he himself cannot fathom and for which, therefore, another's explanation can never be adequate.

No one who has stood on the ramp by the railway line at Auschwitz-Birkenau where the 15-year-old Elie Wiesel stood with his family in May 1944, or who has seen the twisted remains of the gas chambers and crematoria where his mother, grandmother and little sister probably died, would dare challenge Wiesel's need to remember what he cannot forget.

Yet the survivor can find himself strangely on the defensive. Only a handful of Wiesel's 40 books have been about the Holocaust (a word he claims to have used first but one he finds increasingly inaccurate). Now, however, he has revisited that ugly place in a first volume of memoirs called *All the Rivers Run to the Sea*.

Was it for himself or for others that he kept telling the story? "For myself I would simply write and put it in a drawer. Why burden young people with terrifying stories? It is too late for the dead, too late even for those who survived death. But it is not too late for our children."

really for the children of the world."

The paradox at the heart of Wiesel's remembering is that he seems to be trying to explain something he believes inexplicable. I mentioned Daniel Goldhagen's recent book, *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, which blames a deep-rooted cultural anti-Semitism for the Germans' capacity to murder in cold blood, and Christopher Browning's *Ordinary Men* which blamed peer pressure and the abdication of individual responsibility.

Wiesel accepts neither thesis. "I don't believe in collective guilt, nor do I believe in collective innocence. Guilt and innocence are individual descriptions. Only the guilty are guilty. Children of killers are not killers, but children. I don't like theories."

"There are no words, that's the whole problem. The enemy succeeded in pushing his crimes to the outer limits of language, and therefore there are no words. No theory, really, is valid. I have only questions."

Is it because you are a survivor that you resist all explanations of this academic kind?

"I think most survivors do, really."

So for someone who endured and survived there is no relief to be had from explanation?

"Absolutely. Only those who were there know what it meant being there. The outsiders will never know. They can come close, but never know. I always compare it to the friends of Job: Job suffered - and his friends explained."

Wiesel rejects even the powerful amount left by Primo Levi, who was with him in Monowitz, the factory camp at Auschwitz, on the grounds that their circumstances were so different. Levi, who committed suicide in 1987, was an assimilated Jew from Italy, he was older, was protected by his usefulness as a slave-labourer. Above all, he was not religious, so escaped Wiesel's crisis of faith.

"He was much too harsh on the survivors, for instance, when he spoke about people in the 'grey zone' (like the prisoner kapos who beat and tortured fellow inmates). The survivors suffered enough. They don't deserve that. Levi more or less said that the best persecuted and the worst survived."

Before an audience Wiesel is a good performer: tender, humorous and philosophical. Close to it, it is easy to read the lines of trauma in the craggy face and hear grief in the whispering voice. Was there an element of performance here? I think not.

Survivors of the extermination camps are not only witnesses to the greatest systematic slaughter in history, they are damaged individuals.

Wrenched from a cosy, religious village life in Sighet, Romania, separated from the women and girls of the family at Birkenau (although he found his two elder sisters alive after the war), Wiesel clung to his father in Auschwitz and watched him die after the march to Buchenwald.

Are survivors permanently damaged?

"Absolutely. Psychiatrists have proven that the tortured person remains tortured to the end of his or her life."

Do you feel it every day?

He paused, and then his voice was almost inaudible. "I feel it. I don't speak about it. It's personal. It's very

'No. I don't believe in revenge. I was never in the field of Nazi-hunting. It's not my style.'

deep...sad. I think of my father literally every single day. I see my family, literally every day, and I dream about them by night."

Do you dream about the camp itself?

"Yes. More and more so. It's recent, it's astonishing. I checked with my friends who are also survivors and they told me the same thing."

Wiesel has devised a kind of shorthand for speaking about the unspeakable. One of his *dicta* is that suffering does not confer privileges.

Does it confer an obligation?

"No, not even that."

Not even that you must stand as a representative of your generation?

"That's something else. If we invoke our suffering to diminish the suffering around us, that's a different kind of message." (Wiesel was awarded the Nobel prize for helping minorities in various parts of the world.)

To be a writer of the Holocaust is no kind of relief even if the writer feels driven. "I don't feel I really communicate

what I want to. I have the feeling that none of us there has ever succeeded."

"If one day we will, then the world will tremble. But we have not yet managed to speak with the fire and the fear and the awesomeness of the revelation. I compare it to that moment on Mount Sinai. We would reveal something..."

What kind of thing?

"I don't know. About the nature of man, the destiny of man."

Did Levi commit suicide because he couldn't say what he was trying to say?

"I think the other way round. That if he could say it, it would change the world. We all feel that. And since the world hasn't changed, that means he couldn't say it."

Wiesel noted the number of writer survivors who had committed suicide - not only Primo Levi but Piotr Rawicz, Paul Celan, Jerzy Kosinski and Bruno Bettelheim.

Were you tempted to suicide?

"Once I had the temptation. Not any more."

So have you survived your survival?

"Does one ever survive one's survival? I remember one of my students asked a poignant question in class. She said, 'my father is a survivor. Will he always be?' For the children, it's terrible."

Do you want revenge?

"No. I don't believe in revenge. I was never in the field of Nazi-hunting. It's not my style."

In his time as a journalist Wiesel covered the trial of Adolf Eichmann, whom he is convinced he had seen in Sighet organising the transports in 1944. I asked: what did you feel when you saw him again?

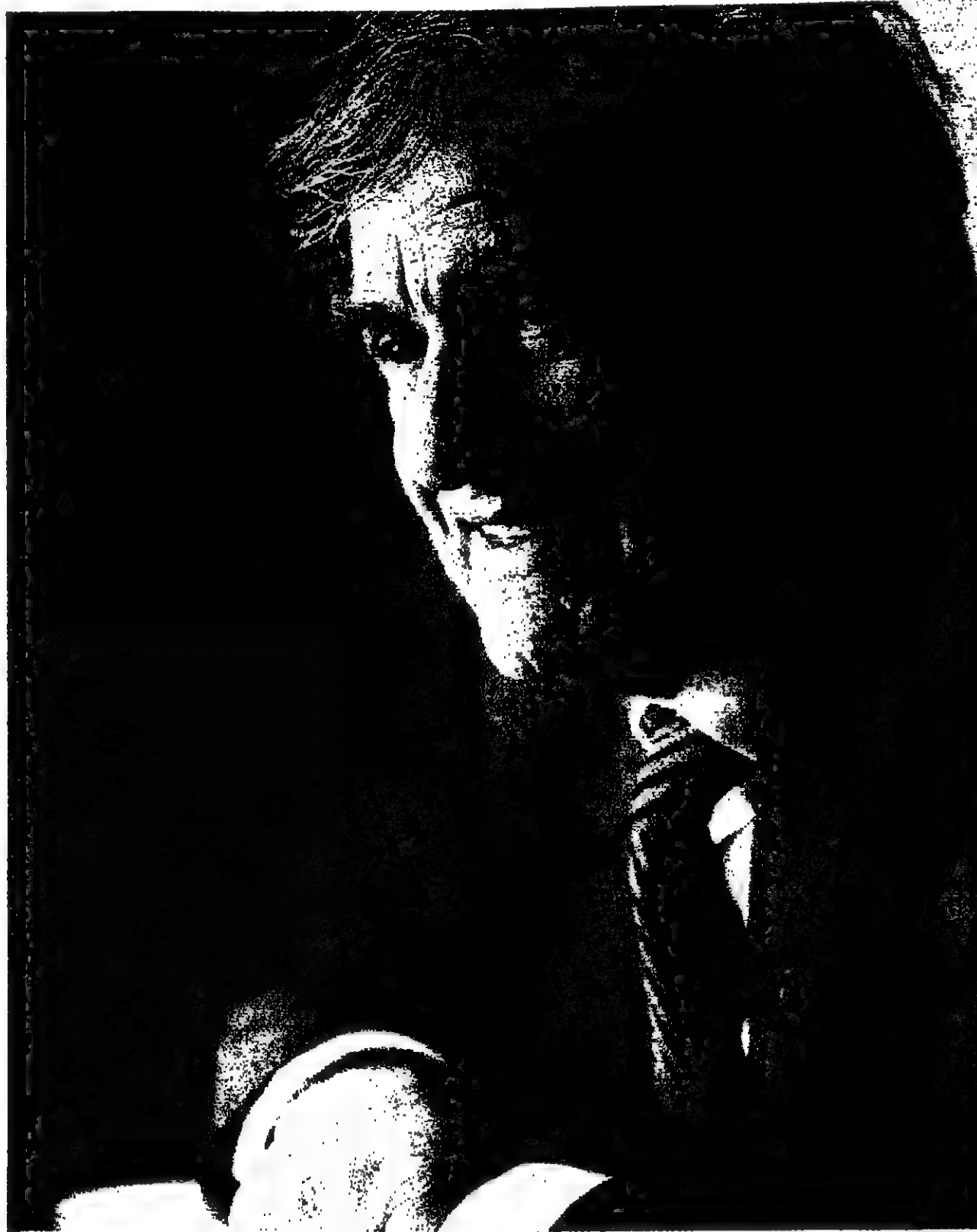
"I felt first of all fascinated by the man. I looked and looked because I really thought he would be a monster. Chav in the Bible has the mark of Cain. I thought he would have three noses, four ears, a kind of Picasso-like monster. He wasn't. He was a normal human being. He spoke clearly, defended himself aptly, ate well, slept well, no problem. He had a sense of humour."

So by what trick or switch...

"That's the whole thing. What made him into the arch-killer?"

Is forgiveness a relevant word to use with you?

"I don't forgive. First, because nobody authorised me to forgive. Second, the killers never asked for it. Even in the Christian religion I think the



Writer Elie Wiesel: 'Whatever I try to do is really for the children of the world'

Peter Aspdon

## A crime that cannot speak its name



In common with hundreds, possibly thousands, of British motorists, I spent a large part of last Saturday morning hanging around a garage waiting for a new quarter light window to be fitted to my car. I had good company; there were three of us, all with different cars from different decades, with the same problem.

We incanted the familiar mantra of those who suffer at the hands of petty criminals: lack of discipline, politics of envy, blame the parents, drugs, inner cities and so on. I threw in a more liberal "lack of employment opportunities" but, in truth, this sounded a duff note in our reactionary song of despair.

Despite political differences, we had something further in common. All of us had taken every precaution advised by every authority in the land to prevent the crime from occurring. None of us had left anything

remotely valuable in view. Car stereos were either removed or rendered inoperable. Alarms were switched on. In my case, the quarter light had been broken for a speculative rummage through my glove box, in which there was, surprise, a pair of gloves so unappealing as to have been left in their proper place by the thieves.

Or should that be vandals? For because nothing was actually taken from my car, the break-in does not register in official Home Office figures for theft from cars. This figure - 814,000 in 1995 - has been falling from its peak of nearly a million in 1992. But how valuable a figure is it in the first place? The Automobile Association estimates as many as two out of three victims of theft from cars do not bother to report the incident to the police.

I did make a point of reporting my case; but the very affable constable who took my details was not a picture of optimism with regard to catching the miscreants. So, beyond

expensive alarms and festooning one's vehicle with pictures of coxas or scorpions (there is a PhD thesis to be written on the iconography of the modern motor car), what can be done?

There is the laminated glass solu-

Most victims of theft from cars do not report the incident to the police

tion: surround yourself with strengthened windcreens. But then you have to accept that your car will be heavier, less fuel-efficient, more of a pollution hazard. And, if you happen to be driving in the Netherlands, potentially fatal if you slip into a dyke, a point which is more than

enough for Brussels to veto such a move. Then there is the technique of showing any potential thieves that you have absolutely nothing in your car at all - a kind of glove-box glass-

ness. Open all compartments, shine a beam under your seats, leave the dashboard uncluttered. Draw attention to your lack of possessions. (A friend who lives in Seville takes this to its logical conclusion by keeping his car unlocked at all times, with a note explaining that it a) contains nothing and b) is not worth very much. That way, it is only violated by homeless tramps who spend happy nights in the back seat. It is an imaginative solution to homelessness, at least.)

These are pleasingly perverse solutions, but unlikely to appeal to most car owners. People who spend upwards of £20,000 on a car for looks, styling or turbo thrust are not famous for their discretion. Fuel injected ostentation on the outside with an interior of cool zen minimal-

ism? It is an unlikely combination.

There is, in truth, little we can do. Indeed, the whole issue of theft from cars is becoming more opaque by the day: the AA has now begun to warn of highly discriminating motorists stripping out their own car stereos because they want to upgrade models with the insurance money.

One way or another, breaking into cars has become the crime that cannot be bothered to speak its name. I do not know of anyone who has not suffered from it nor of anyone who treats the issue with anything other than resigned indifference.

Yet it has become an important acid test for social relations. Here is a problem which cannot be tackled by technology, nor even more police officers on the beat. It only takes seconds to smash a quarter light and grab a piece of the action. The only way to stop it is to convince more people that it is wrong, pure and simple. And that is the most difficult way of all.

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## In the Pink

**Brian Reading** examines the case for getting out and going it alone to prosperity

thereafter to expel defaulters automatically. Yet, no credible alternative discipline has been suggested.

No government will transgress deliberately. All will promise and strive to remain virtuous. But politicians cannot deliver what voters will not accept, particularly when penalties are lacking. When governments face, as they will, intractable budgetary problems caused by slow growth and mounting pension

The ECB might, in the name of sound money, punish the good with the bad. But this will push the good needlessly into recession. They will not tolerate that but will be tempted, as was the UK during its ERM membership, to transgress themselves. The Euro will be weak and

The only alternative to expelling transgressors - a retreat from the single currency - will be to advance to a federal superstate. National fiscal sovereignty will be abandoned progressively to a European finance ministry with a large enough federal budget to hide fiscal transfers between member countries. Thus, just as the single mar-

Hurd says that he, Major and Labour party leader Tony Blair all would vote in a Goldsmith referendum against a European superstate. Logically, they must show an alternative way of disciplining

fiscally sovereign governments - or vote against a single currency, too. But disciplining governments is federalism, and the lost freedom to tax and spend according to one's own voters' wishes ends national sovereignty.

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# Weekend Investor

Wall Street

## Does it really matter who is president?

After all, says Maggie Urry, two Republicans are fighting it out for the White House

When 72-year-old senator Robert Dole made his farewell speech on Tuesday this week after 35 years on Capitol Hill, anyone listening might have thought he was retiring. He thanked his family, friends, staff and constituents, sniffed back a tear and reminisced. But, rather than giving up public life, Dole's resignation as Senate majority leader was the starting point - he hopes - of a new career as president of the United States.

The very next day, Dole set off electioneering, telling 500 business leaders in Ohio that "all Americans need economic improvement and security". Just the sort of empty phrase that fills political campaigns.

Yet it is going to take a lot more than that for Dole to win. He is 20 per cent behind President Clinton in the polls and most analysts think he does not stand much of a chance of winning unless Clinton obliges by doing something to lose.

Strangely, perhaps, that likely outcome is not affecting the stock market. It generally rises in presidential election years, and this one has been no exception so far.

Investors usually prefer a Republican in the White House. After all, the advances in the market over the past year and a half began when the congressional election in November 1994 led to a landslide Republican victory. For the first time in ages, that party had control of both houses and its "contract with America" was going to bring wonderful things.

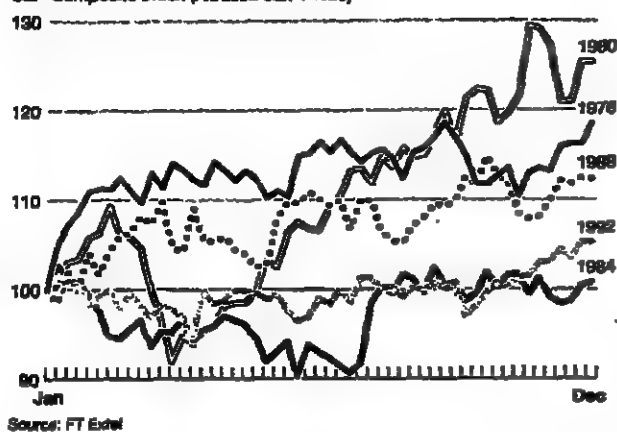
The budget would be balanced and taxes cut. Most encouragingly for investors, capital gains tax was to be reduced. Since the market's low point in November 1994, just after that election, the Dow Jones Industrial Average has risen around 2,000 points.

It would be hard to attribute this gain to the Republican congressional victory and, in any case, Clinton has claimed it for his own. A week ago, after the strong employment figures were released, he stood in the sunshine outside the White House to proclaim that the economy was doing well - and suggest it was all due to his presidency. Indeed, this is the way that Clinton's campaign is going. Every time the Republicans think of a policy, the Democrats adopt it, too.

Clinton's move to the centre

### Voting for rising markets

S&P Composite Index (rebased Jan 1=100)



makes the likelihood of a Democratic victory in November less worrying, according to Tim Morris, chief investment officer at Bessemer Trust. He points to the comforting presence of Robert Rubin, the former Goldman Sachs investment banker, as Treasury secretary and suggests this has been a positive influence on the administration's attitude to the economy and business.

Peter Stenberg, chief investment officer at State Street Global Advisors, also doubts if Dole has much chance of winning. "There is not a lot of uncertainty," about the election this year, he says - although he adds that, if the gap between the contenders in the opinion polls narrowed, it might have an effect on the market.

Paul Lesutis, managing director at Brandywine Asset Management, is another who thinks there is little to worry about. The economy is doing well, he says, and there is no reason to expect a change in policy whoever is elected - Dole or Clinton.

A deal to balance the budget, a main plank of the "contract with America", has not come to pass, however. Dole's last week in the Senate was marred by a failure to pass the balanced budget amendment again. That lack of agreement has caused some concern in the bond market.

Yet, equity investors seem less worried and Lesutis shrugs off the budget deficit. He says that, given the size of the economy, a deficit of \$100bn is "nothing" and the balanced budget a "non-event". Darwin Beck, a political analyst at CS First Boston, agrees

that the market is not focusing on the election since the "generally accepted view is that Clinton will be re-elected". But he points out that, even if this happens, the Democrats will not necessarily regain control of Congress. If they did, there would be more concern about the outlook for the deficit.

With the Republicans running Congress and Clinton moving to the centre, he says: "To a large extent, the budget battle has been won by those who want to cut". Whoever wins the White House, the direction of the deficit will be the same, although the size of the reduction would differ.

As for the capital gains tax cut which investors want - particularly those who have taken part in that 2,000-point rise in the stock market - that would become an important part of the government's programme if Dole were elected.

Political analysts at Salomon Brothers have worked out how Dole could win. First, he has to persuade former general Colin Powell to be his running mate which, supposedly, would cut Clinton's lead in the polls to 3 per cent.

Then Dole has to take advantage of the arcane US system of choosing a president through an electoral college and, for only the second time in the nation's history, win the election while losing the popular vote. Roll on November.

**Dow Jones Ind Average**  
Monday 5687.57 +0.24  
Tuesday 5688.06 -19.21  
Wednesday 5688.29 -0.37  
Thursday 5687.96 -0.34  
Friday

London

## Slater's magic packs them in

Philip Coggan sees a veteran performer back in action

The Criterion theatre in central London's Piccadilly Circus held enough people to please any theatrical impresario. Men in suits sat soberly, pondering whether to sign away their clients' money. The years had rolled away. Jim was back. Well, sort of.

The occasion was the launch of the Johnson Fry Slater Growth unit trust. Back in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Jim Slater was Britain's equivalent of George Soros. The City hung on his every word.

But his vehicle, Slater Walker Securities, eventually succumbed to the 1973-74 bear market. Slater became, in his own words, a "minus millionaire" although he has inched his way back into the public eye with the occasional book on investment and column of stock market tips.

This time, he was the warm-up act for his son, Mark, who actually manages the trust. But it was Jim whom the

assembled financial advisers had come to see - a Johnson Fry Tomkins unit trust would not have drawn a crowd.

Mark Slater has been investment adviser to the trust since July 1995, since when it has been renamed and acquired recently by Johnson Fry. The performance under Slater (over a very short period and with only a small amount of money in the fund) has been good.

The investment principles of the fund, devised by the elder Slater, are based on a number of sieves, including a low price ratio relative to earnings growth; strong cash flow; and good relative share price performance. Since the sieves eliminate a lot of companies - the April exercise threw up just seven which passed all the tests - some modifications will be applied to create a properly diversified portfolio.

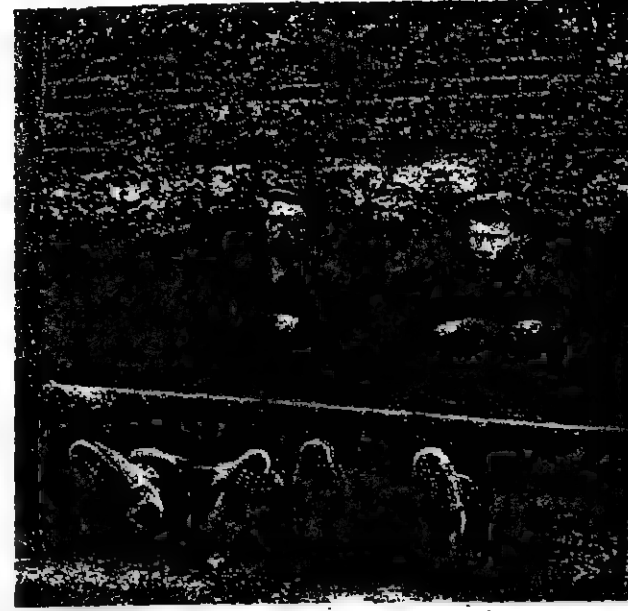
But the real question for stock market-watchers is whether the promotion of such a personality-based trust signals some sort of bull market

excess. There were several Slater Walker funds in the late 1960s and early 1970s (one was unkindly dubbed the "Dustbin trust") at a time of a roaring bull market.

There are a few signs of speculative activity at the moment: private investors are piling into unit trusts; new issues have been racing to first day premiums; and small companies, the area of the market which often produces rapid share price movements, have been performing well. But shares, while not cheap, do not seem to be at stratospheric heights. Peaks are normally associated with price-earnings ratios of over 20: the FT-SE All-Share index is now on an historic multiple of 16.

One feature of the early 1970s was easy credit, which led rapidly to inflationary pressures. Last week's rate cut - at a time when money supply growth is strong - could point to a return of the old boom/bust cycle.

The economic statistics pub-



The London market site awaiting correction from Wall Street. Mary Gann

lished this week were helpful to the chancellor - up to a point. Producer prices fell in May, the headline rate of inflation dropped by more than expected, and the average earnings figures did not show an increase in cost pressures.

But the underlying rate of inflation (the measure which excludes mortgage interest payments) is still, at 2.8 per cent, above the government's target for the end of this year of 2.5 per cent.

In any case, the statistics for the previous month should not be the guiding principle for monetary decisions. Changes in interest rates take 12 to 18 months to work through the economy, which means that policy needs to be set with regard to forecasts for 1997.

Most economists seem to think that growth will be strong by then, on the back of the last Budget's tax cuts and the previous reductions in mortgage rates, so the justification for last week's move still looks pretty shaky.

Eddie George, the governor of the Bank of England, gave nothing away in his Mansion House speech as to whether he supported the recent cut. But he did note that consumer demand was strengthening and that this could threaten achievement of the inflation target further ahead. Nevertheless, reducing interest rates might be the best weapon in the chancellor's pre-election locker. As he hinted in his Mansion House speech, the parlous state of the public finances does not appear to leave much room for tax cuts.

The stock market took a little heart from the economic

data but the statistics did not do enough to shift the FT-SE 100 index out of its recent 3,650-3,850 trading range. For the moment, equities do not seem to be where the action is in world markets. Sometimes, it seems as if there is a "jump" of volatility, which alights occasionally on a particular market sector - in the early 1990s, for example, it was currencies.

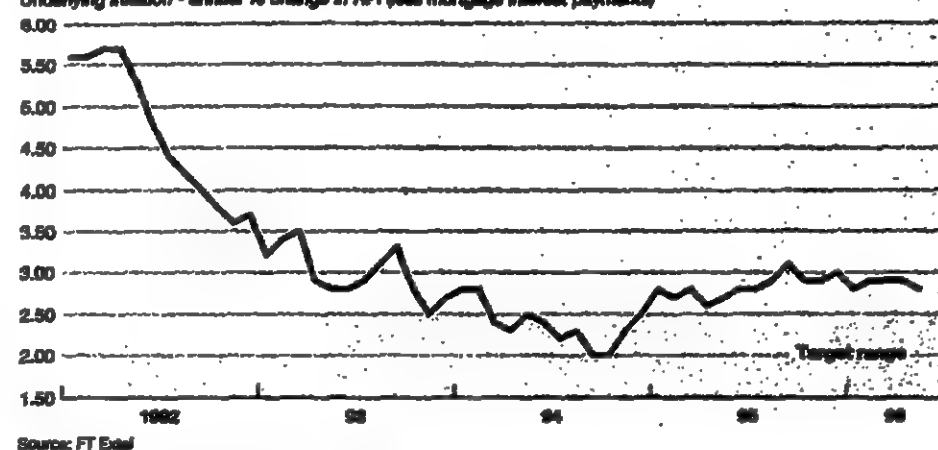
In 1996, commodities seem to have attracted the excitement, as Thursday night's revelations about Sumitomo's losses in the copper market showed. But bonds are also having periods of volatility.

The Treasury bond market has shown repeated signs of unease at the strength of the US economy, and the potential for inflationary pressure. The yield on the 10-year Treasury bond hit 7.3 per cent this week, its highest level of 1996, putting pressure on bond markets round the world. If it hits 7.5 per cent, equities may really begin to struggle.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average has wobbled on various occasions but has yet to experience the mush expected 10 to 15 per cent "correction" which might let off some of the recent speculative steam. London remains grey to these international influences, as it does to events such as the Russian presidential election, which could cause some nervousness on Monday. Come to think of it, it was an international crisis - the quadrupling of oil prices in 1973 - that played a part in finishing off Slater Walker all those years ago.

### Still outside the target range

Underlying inflation - annual % change in RPI (less mortgage interest payments)



### Highlights of the week

	Price	Change	52 week	52 week
	High	on week	High	Low
FT-SE 100 Index	3793.4	+46.8	3687.1	3282.7
FT-SE Mid 250 Index	4456.6	+18.8	4088.8	3589.7
BAA	481	-22	595	408
Bank of Scotland	347	-17%	316	205%
British Aerospace	980	+43	984	322
British Land	428	+04	445	255
Cain Energy	302	+25	309	92
Cookson Group	288	-16%	328	238
Delta	280	-40	312	158
FIJ	184	+19	191	161
Glaxo Wellcome	567	+45%	590	738%
Knight-Ridder	640	+35	685	418%
London Electricity	982	-29	972	532%
Manchester United	468	+25	480	151
TradePoint	148	-40	185	125



Barry Riley

## The retreat from 3 per cent

Clarke has admitted he was unrealistic. Where does he go now?

Goodbye, 3 per cent. The chancellor of the exchequer, Kenneth Clarke, finally admitted this week that his projection of UK economic growth in 1996, made last November, is unrealistic and will be cut in the Treasury's summer forecast early next month. My guess is that he will try for 2.5 per cent this time.

Even this reduced figure, if achieved, would rank the UK well up the 1996 growth league table of the increasingly sluggish advanced economies. The best is generally thought to be the US, where the bond market is in full retreat at present in the face of a growth scare, prompting fears of higher inflation and interest rates. But this is no runaway expansion. Many forecasters still think US growth will be nearer 2 than 2.5 per cent this year.

As for continental Europe, weakness in Germany and France, where growth is probably running at only about 1 per cent, has dragged down the previously buoyant Italian economy, which is slowing even more sharply than the UK's this year.

The reason the UK is out of line on growth is that the government has started to cut taxes, thus putting more money into consumers' pockets after a period of great stringency.

Across the rest of Europe,

by contrast, taxes are still going up as governments strive vainly to hit their Maastricht debt targets. Moreover, the UK's monetary growth rate has been allowed to accelerate to 10 per cent, and interest rates have been cut again.

A 2.5 per cent forecast would be in line with the Treasury's estimate of underlying sustainable growth. But actual growth experienced in the 1990s so far has been only just over 1 per cent annually. If you go back 25 years, it has averaged 2 per cent.

What, then, is the justification for projecting an acceleration? It is claimed that the UK economy is at last reaping the benefits of the labour market reforms that were introduced in the 1980s. Moreover, there has been rapid development of information technology and it is, therefore, likely that the rate of technical progress has speeded up.

Well, maybe. But, on the other hand, one of the key drivers of an economy, population growth, has slowed. In the 1980s, it was 0.6 per cent a year; now, it is only half that. Worse, there are more pensioners and the active workforce is, if anything, shrinking. Recent falls in unemployment reflect people leaving the labour market rather than unemployed people finding jobs.

A growing inclination to buy now and pay later was another important reason for the buoyancy of demand in the 1980s. But the debt burden of the personal sector reached a new peak at the end of that decade, from which it has been retreating slowly. People now are very reluctant to borrow more. The

**It seems more logical to argue that the UK is faced with a spell of quite subdued growth**

government's borrowing also threatens to approach unsustainable levels. Only the company sector is in a position to take on more debt, if it wants to.

Overall, therefore, it seems hard to believe that the UK is now heading for sustained high growth on a scale achieved only in exceptional circumstances, such as the years of rapid recovery after the second world war.

In fact, it seems far more logical to argue that we are faced with a spell of quite subdued growth.

Incidentally, one good reason for expecting the US to continue to have a comparatively buoyant

economy is that population growth continues to be relatively strong there - about 1 per cent a year.

So, recent history tells us that the advanced economies are slowing. But their governments are desperate to pretend otherwise because rapid growth is the only politically acceptable way out of their crisis of public finance.

What would happen, for instance, if the UK Treasury slashed its growth forecast to 1.5 per cent over the next few years? A looming fiscal crisis would be exposed, rather than the smooth progress towards a balanced budget that dominates the Treasury's medium term projections.

Clarke's renewed promise on Wednesday of a 20 per cent basic rate of income tax "in due course" would look simply silly. So might his claim that the UK economy "is already in a very good shape". True, it is looking better than some of its rivals at present.

The stock market, nevertheless, seems to believe Clarke's version of economic events. The dividend yield on the All-Share index, of 3.8 per cent, has dipped below the real yield of nearly 3.9 per cent on index-linked gilts. Normally, shares yield about 0.5 per cent more than the linkers.

This shift in yields can be interpreted as implying that investors have raised their

expectation of real dividend growth by a little over 0.5 per cent a year.

It might not sound much but, in the context of the actual annual real dividend growth of 2 per cent since the end of the second world war, it is a significant change. The similarity of this dividend growth rate to the long-run GDP growth rate is no coincidence. Can we now pencil in 2.5 per cent?

Unfortunately, in the long run, this is likely to prove wishful thinking on the part of both investors and Kenneth Clarke. Each bull market - notably that of 1997 - has seen the dividend yield plummet to unsustainable levels.

Edward Hadas, European equity strategist at NatWest Securities in London, thinks that people across Europe should get used to the idea of 1.5 per cent annual economic growth. He says this is not the disaster it might sound because, in the absence of population growth, it would still mean that living standards would rise 50 per cent in only 27 years.

Kenneth Clarke, however, would not be amused. I should add that such slow growth would imply that equities were seriously overpriced: the FT-SE All-Share index should be yielding nearly 5 per cent, for instance. And government bonds across Europe would be facing a serious crisis of credibility.

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## Aristotle provides inspiration in fight for cultural crock of gold

Residents resist plan for \$150m factory near philosopher's birthplace

By Karin Hope in Athens

Aristotle's strictures against people who make "great gains from the wrong sources" could well be the inspiration for the residents of Olympiada on Greece's Aegean coast. They are fighting a plan by Canada's TVX Gold to build a \$150m gold processing plant on their doorstep.

Olympiada lies by the site of the great philosopher's birth, and its residents would much prefer to transform their town into an Aristotelian shrine and live off tourism than have it become a glibby mining town.

Since January, they have manned roadblocks to prevent TVX Hellen, the company's Greek subsidiary, from starting work at the proposed site. The plant would extract gold from a 200,000-tonne stockpile of ore residues left over from 30 years of lead and zinc mining in the surrounding pine forests.

Archaeological excavations are already under way at nearby Stagira, a city built on a spectacular promontory above the northern Aegean where Aristotle was born in 384BC.

There are plans to build a centre for philosophical studies, which could be partly financed by the European Union, and to revive a cultural festival staged every year in Aristotle's honour by the ancient Greeks.

Mr Vassilis Naoum, a local official, says: "Olympiada wants soft development based on its links with Aristotle. We're not against



Aristotle on wealth v the arts



the Canadians investing in this district but we can't have a factory just a couple of miles away from the village and a unique archaeological site."

The EU-funded excavations at Stagira have already created more than 100 jobs at Olympiada. Villagers are helping archaeologists uncover 12,400 high fortifications, paved roads, a piped water supply and the remains of a classical-era marketplace or agora.

Mr Costas Simanides, the excavation director, says: "We don't expect to discover Aristotle's bones. But there is 30 years or more of work to be done unearthing a really stunning site."

Moreover, the prospect of a gold extraction project has sent property values plummeting along the stretch of sandy coastline where Olympiada residents

hoped to sell off land for development.

Their opposition to what would be one of the largest foreign investments in Greece for 20 years surfaced just as the Socialist government was attempting to promote a pro-business image designed to attract international investors. Mr Vassos Papanicolaou, the industry minister, has given her personal backing to the gold processing project.

In trying to defuse opposition to its project, TVX has stressed its environmental credentials. It says it will spend \$7m on environmental studies and a clean-up of the 300-square mile concession area, including the infilling of disused mines and other measures to prevent contamination of local water sources.

But not even the offer of a trip

to Montana where TVX operates a gold processing plant using the same technology next to a US national park, could persuade Olympiada residents to reverse their decision.

TVX has also undertaken to retain 600 out of 900 workers at Kassandria Mines, the only large employer in a district where fishing and charcoal-burning are the main activities. But Mr Naoum points out that most employees come from Straton rather than Olympiada.

Mr Daniel Trivelli, general manager of TVX Hellen, the company's Greek subsidiary, says: "We calculate that once the project is up and running, the gold extraction unit will create five service jobs for every one in mining. And we can also help Olympiada generate income from tourists coming to visit the mining operations."

## THE LEX COLUMN

### Copper capers

Sumitomo Corporation's loss of an estimated \$1.8bn from unauthorised dealing in the copper market is the latest disaster to call into question the assumption that exchange-based trading is better than over-the-counter dealing. Of course, the disaster has again highlighted the advantages of exchanges - the use of margin payments and the spread of risk means that there is no substantial exposure to a single counterparty. If Sumitomo had been overwhelmed by the size of the loss, the victims would have been those who traded with Mr Yasuo Hamanaka, Sumitomo's former chief copper trader, in the over-the-counter market rather than London Metal Exchange members. And the LME's ability to continue business yesterday is also testimony to the strength of exchange trading.

But the wild gyrations in this market are worrying. In a small market dominated by relatively few large traders, it is not difficult to produce rapid price movements. Since the futures prices are set off the cash market, this can give an unfair advantage to the largest traders, which could if they chose push the market in the direction that suited their own positions. Regulators should try harder to ensure a more transparent market.

### Gilts

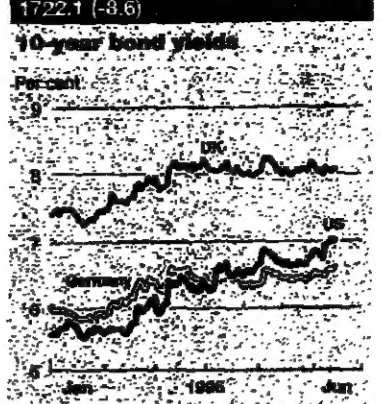
The greatest worry for the gilts market these days is no longer what the Labour party will do if elected but what damage the Conservative government may inflict on the economy in a final pre-election fling.

The consensus is still that, after last week's surprise quarter point bank base rate cut, 5% per cent will mark the bottom of the interest rate cycle. Chancellor Kenneth Clarke's Mansion House speech earlier this week struck a predictable note of economic responsibility. But actions speak louder than words, and the rate cut - widely assumed to have been against the wishes of the Bank of England - smacked of political expediency.

The result is a growing fear that the government, trying to carry favour with voters, will either cut rates again or cut taxes in the autumn budget. Either would be considered imprudent by the gilts market - rightly so, given the state of the government's finances and the wider economy.

With 10-year yields around 8 per cent, gilts may look relatively cheap, but in fact the market has performed surprisingly well given the recent weakness of US Treasuries. This is partly because of support from the strength of the pound, but that could

FT-SE Eurotrack 200:  
1722.1 (-8.6)



Source: FT Equity

shares have risen 45-fold since the group's near-collapse six years ago. The danger is that investors are getting carried away. The sector now trades at a demanding 30 per cent premium to the market average. And poorly performing companies have been marked up along with the rest - have gained a tenth over the past two weeks. It will take significant profit upgrades over the summer just to maintain ratings. The best of the retailers' run may already be over.

### British Gas

British Gas was never likely to deliver a decisive counter-blow to its regulator yesterday. But the company's pedestrian response is still conspicuous for its failure to punch holes in her central arguments. Yesterday's modest share price rise simply reflected relief that, for once, BG managed to avoid shooting itself in the foot.

Nonetheless, the regulator looks on weak ground in two areas. The tougher end of her range of proposed price cuts, for a start, rests on the implausible proposition that when BG was privatised only some of its assets were sold at a discount. It ought to be difficult for BG to rubbish this; if it can, there is a big prize to be won: the asset base on which BG is allowed to earn a return would rise by a hefty £2bn.

There is a lesser but still worthwhile battle to be fought over the regulator's estimate of potential efficiency gains. Her proposals assume BG can cut controllable costs each year by a distinctly aggressive 8 per cent in real terms. If it put its mind to it, the company ought to be able to negotiate a slightly more lenient figure, giving a healthy boost to cashflow.

Armed with these points, the company might just be able to pull off good enough deal to avoid resorting to an MMC inquiry. But the odds are against it. BG can always cherish the slim hope that the MMC would improve the logic of the regulator's over-approach, on the pragmatic ground that it means moving the regulatory goalposts more than shareholders should have to put up with. And it is true that the downside risks of going to the MMC look modest.

In short, a hazy period for shareholders is in prospect. There is still plenty to keep long-term investors interested - the case for spinning off BG's exploration and production side is compelling, and there is lots of scope to gear up the balance sheet - but it will probably be a long wait.

## Russian bond prices fall

Continued from Page 1

of Russia as an international borrower and threatens its planned debut Eurobond.

But most also expect the Russian government to relent. One banker said the episode might also serve as a salutary reminder for outside investors of the risks in doing business in Russia. "It takes something like this to wake people up and remind them that this isn't Wall Street," he said.

For western investment banks, the saga began on April 24, when they were told that bonds they had bought were stolen - some in the war-torn province of Chechnya - and were to be frozen until criminal investigations were completed.

On May 5, a group of western banks wrote to Mr Vladimir Pavlov, the minister of finance, seeking information. They received an answer from his deputy, Mr Sergei Vavilov, who said the freezing was in accordance with Russian law.

On May 14, the Russian authorities withheld interest payments on frozen bonds and refused to redeem those which had reached maturity.

## South Africa moves to ease foreign exchange controls

By Mark Ashurst in Johannesburg

The South African government yesterday committed itself to a tighter fiscal policy and moved cautiously to ease foreign exchange controls as it unveiled its long-awaited macro-economic strategy.

But the document, designed to bolster the confidence of investors battered by the weakened rand, fell short of new commitments to privatise state assets. The reaction from local and international business and trade unions was mixed, while the rand and equities markets remained flat in this trade.

Mr Trevor Manuel, finance minister, vowed to cut the budget deficit to 4 per cent of gross domestic product in the 1997 financial year - a year ahead of previous estimates - to achieve the target of 3 per cent by 1999.

The anti-inflationary package would depend on cuts in government expenditure as a proportion of gross domestic product. This would release funds for an

"expansionary" public sector investment programme to redress a "R170bn (\$8bn) backlog" in the development of national infrastructure, he said.

If the financial targets were met, the government forecast a rise in foreign direct investment to \$806m by 2000, from this year's estimate of \$165m. Details of how the deficit reduction would be achieved were not available, although tax reforms and debt refinancing were expected to boost the government's revenue.

Privatisation would be considered on a case by case basis, and the government remained intent on finding a strategic equity partner to take a minority stake in Telkom, the state-owned telecoms giant.

Further privatisation could proceed only after "the realisation of efficiencies" and agreement on the proper asset value of public sector companies.

Mr Manuel took a further step in the relaxation of exchange controls by doubling the limit on asset swaps between local institutions and foreign companies to 10

per cent. Foreign currency transactions between institutions would also be allowed to the value of 3 per cent of institutions' net cash flow in 1995.

Foreign investors were granted improved access to domestic credit, to the value of 100 per cent of shareholders' equity.

In the manufacturing and retail sectors, local companies paying duty on imports will be able to offset the costs to the value of all exports within a 30-day period.

Mr Martinus Deling, chairman of insurance group Sanlam, praised the deficit target and exchange control relaxations. "If we succeed in placing 10 per cent of our assets overseas by the end of the year then we will be doing very well," he said.

Mr Peter de Simone, analyst at the Washington-based Investment Responsibilities Research Centre which monitors multinational companies, said achieving the deficit target was vital "to avert the threat of restructuring from the International Monetary Fund within a couple of years."

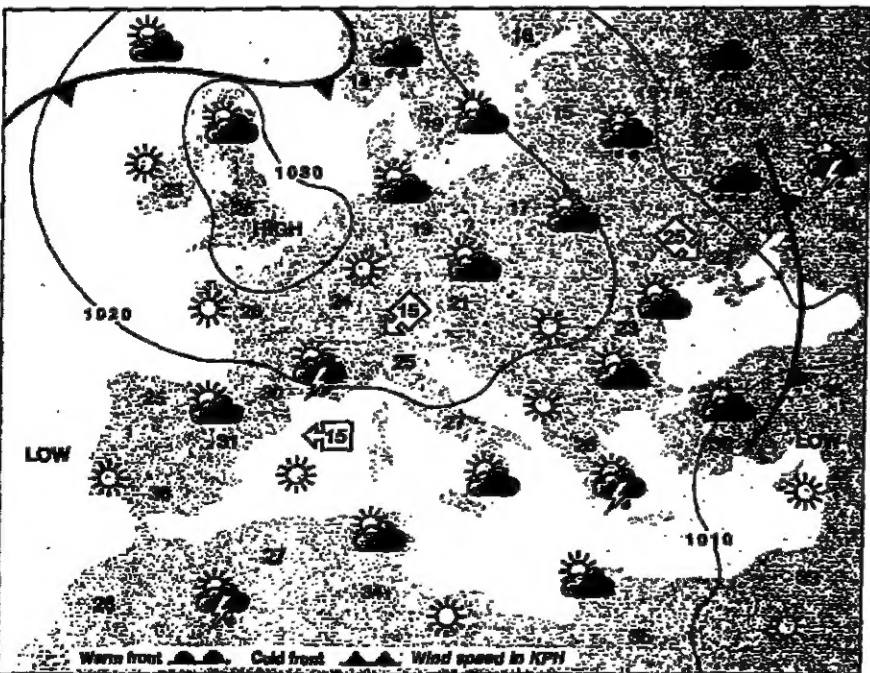
## FT WEATHER GUIDE

### Europe today

It will be sunny in the UK with temperatures between 20C-25C. A surge of hot air is expected over western and southern France generating thunder showers from the French Alps to the Pyrenees during the afternoon and evening. Readings between 32C-38C will prevail over Spain and most of Italy. Sunshine will also be plentiful in Italy, Croatia and Bosnia. The cooling trend during the last few days over central Europe will continue but cloud cover will hamper the sun in northern and eastern Germany and Poland. Thunder showers will linger from eastern Ukraine to northern Russia.

### Five-day forecast

Cool and dry conditions will continue across central Europe. It will be sunny in France and most sections of the British Isles with no significant changes in temperature. Spain will be hot with a few thunder showers. Scattered thunder showers will erupt over Italy.



Station at 12 GMT. Temperatures maximum for day. Forecasts by Meteorological Centre of the Netherlands

### TODAY'S TEMPERATURES

Abu Dhabi	sun	30	Beijing	cloudy	31	Caracas	cloudy	32	Faro	sun	27	Harbin	rain	32
Accra	sun	30	Bombay	sun	32	Cairo	sun	34	Frankfurt	sun	28	Hong Kong	sun	32
Algiers	sun	30	Buenos Aires	sun	28	Cebu	sun	32	Geneva	sun	28	Jaipur	sun	32
Ankara	sun	30	Calcutta	sun	32	Chicago	sun	28	Glasgow	sun	25	Kobe	sun	32
Athens	sun	30	Colon	sun	32	Colombo	sun	32	Hamburg	sun	28	London	sun	32
Bahia	sun	30	Dakar	sun	32	Dallas	sun	32	Helsinki	sun	28	Los Angeles	sun	32
Bangkok	sun	30	Dhaka	sun	32	Dubai	sun	32	Manila	sun	32	Lyon	sun	32
Bombay	sun	32	Delhi	sun	32	Dublin	sun	32	Moscow	sun	28	Madrid	sun	32
Buenos Aires	sun	28	Guangzhou	sun	32	Edinburgh	sun	32	Mumbai	sun	32	Mexico City	cloudy	32
Calcutta	sun	32	Hankow	sun	32	Frankfurt	sun	28	Nairobi	sun	32	Paris	sun	32
Caracas	cloudy	32	Hong Kong	sun	32	Glasgow	sun	25	Rangoon	sun	32	Rio	sun	32
Cairo	sun	34	Jaipur	sun	32	Hamburg	sun	28	San Francisco	sun	24	Singapore	cloudy	32
Cebu	sun	32	Kobe	sun	32	Helsinki	sun	28	Seoul	sun	30	Stockholm	sun	32
Chicago	sun	28	London	sun	32	Manila	sun	32	Sydney	sun	32	Strasbourg	sun	32
Colon	sun	32	Los Angeles	sun	32	Moscow	sun	28	Taipei	sun	32	Tokyo	sun	32
Dakar	sun	32	Mexico City	cloudy	32	Mumbai	sun	32	Toronto	sun	32	Vancouver	sun	32
Dallas	sun	32	Nairobi	sun	32	Nanjing	sun	32	Ulaanbaatar	sun	32	Vienna	sun	32
Dubai	sun	32	Paris	sun	32	Osaka	sun	32	Washington	sun	32	Winnipeg	sun	32
Dublin	sun	32	Rangoon	sun	32	Perth	sun	32	Zurich	sun	32			
Edinburgh	sun	32	San Francisco	sun	24	Prague	sun	32						
Frankfurt	sun	28	Seoul	sun	30									
Glasgow	sun	25	Singapore	cloudy	32									
Hamburg	sun	28	Stockholm	sun	32									
Helsinki	sun	28	Strasbourg	sun	32									
Manila	sun	32	Taipei	sun	32									
Moscow	sun	28	Tokyo	sun	32									
Mumbai	sun	32	Toronto	sun	32									
Nanjing	sun	32	Ulaanbaatar	sun	32									
Nanjing	sun	32	Vienna	sun	32									
Nanjing	sun	32	Washington	sun	32									
Nanjing	sun	32	Winnipeg	sun	32									
Nanjing	sun	32	Zurich	sun	32									

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